

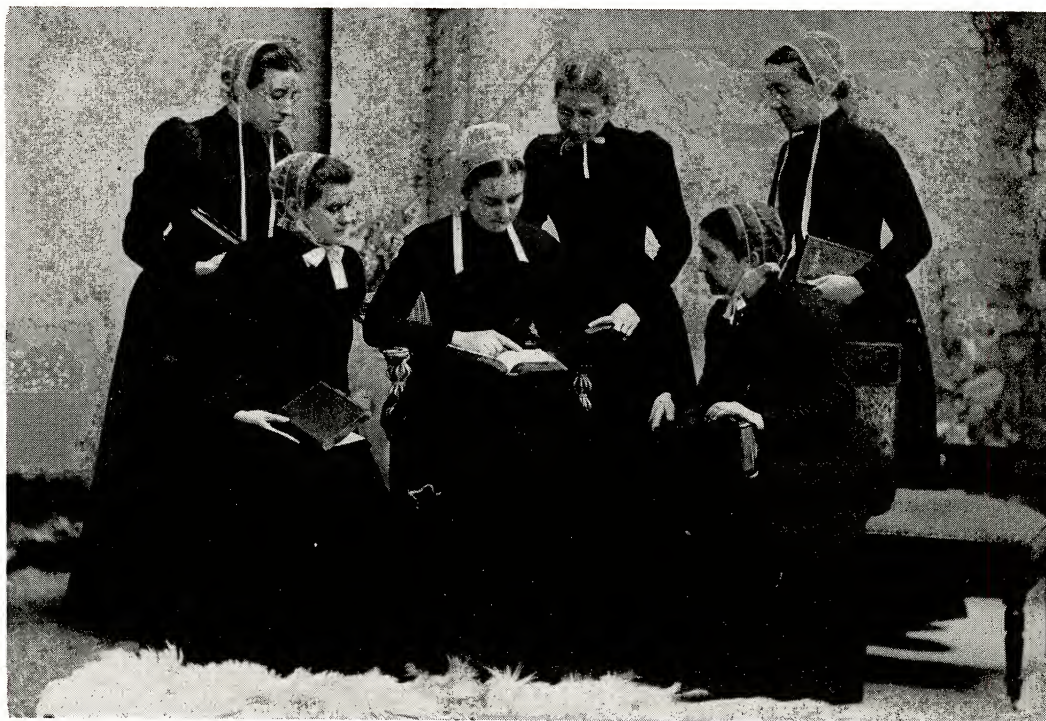
MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 1



From an Old Photograph Taken at Elkhart, Indiana

The picture above is reproduced from an old photograph in the Phoebe M. Kolb collection in the Archives of the Mennonite Church. It was taken in 1903 for the *Chicago Chronicle* to illustrate Mennonite garb. The young women in this illustration, as well as the young men pictured in the October, 1952, MHB modeled these costumes, which they did not necessarily wear, to show types of plain clothing then being worn by some Mennonites in Indiana. Left to right: Mrs. Lavona Berkey Ebersole, Barbara Blosser Steiner, Minnie Stauffer, Adeline Brunk, Anna Holdeman Miller, Elsie Kolb Bender.

Christian Life Conferences

John Umble

Christian Life Conference is a name for an inspirational conference held in recent years in (old) Mennonite congregations. Hesston College students and instructors attended a "Christian Life Conference" at the Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church near Harper, Kansas, during the Easter vacation in 1926. A similar conference was held at the Home Mission in Chicago in March 1926. Such a conference was held also at the Mennonite Church near Metamora, Illinois, during the Christmas vacation in 1928.

The Christian Life Conference had its inception in a Young Men's Conference held at the Pennsylvania Church near Hesston, Kansas, on Dec. 31, 1917, and Jan. 1, 1918. The conference was called to enable the young men to discuss prob-

lems relating to the Mennonite testimony during the war. The success of this meeting led to its continuance the next year as a Young People's Conference with both young men and young women participating. This conference was held annually until 1926 when its name was changed to Christian Life Conference.

Noah Oyer, dean of Goshen College, who was a member of and deeply interested in the General Sunday School Committee, the Young People's Problems Committee, and the Young People's Bible Meeting Topics Committee, is credited with arranging for the first Christian Life Conference held at Goshen College in 1927 at the conclusion of the annual Winter Bible Term. It had been advertised as a "conference for old and young, but especially for the young people of the Mennonite Church."

Interest in this annual conference at Goshen College was very good from the beginning. On several occasions many were unable to find room in Assembly

Hall and the adjoining classrooms. It continues to be one of the most inspiring and helpful meetings of the college year. Hesston College seems to have held no Christian Life Conference as such in 1927, but in connection with Young People's Week during the Special Bible Term Daniel Kauffman gave talks on the Christian life and also "Life Work Talks." Hesston College held a Christian Life Conference in 1928 and Eastern Mennonite School in 1929. At the latter institution the two-day conference concluded a ministers' week. Such meetings are still quite general throughout the Mennonite Church east and west. They are held in connection with the Winter Bible Schools and by individual congregations. The Canton Bible School held one in 1947, the Spring Mount Mission in the same year, and the Blainsport Church at Reinholds, Pennsylvania, in 1948.

Goshen, Indiana.

(From *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*)

The Early Life of John F. Funk

Willard D. Ruth

Bishop Heinrich Funk, the great-great-grandfather of John F. Funk, came to America in 1717. He was an able writer. One of his books which was widely used in the Mennonite Church was the book *Eine Restitution*.

John F. Funk's father was Jacob Funk, born on December 16, 1796, in Springfield Township, Bucks County, later moving to New Britain Township and locating on what is now known as the Hayden Block Factory, which was at one time the home of Bishop Henry Rosenberger of the Blooming Glen Church. This farm was originally part of a 1,000-acre tract dating back to the time of the Penns.

Jacob Funk was a mason, bricklayer, farmer, and market man. John would arise at two o'clock in the morning to accompany his father to Philadelphia with a market wagon load of eggs, poultry, butter, and produce. He would spend several days in Philadelphia and return to his home at ten o'clock at night, learning early what a long day meant. Jacob Funk was color blind and one will find that many of his descendants were also color blind. He lived to be eighty-one years old. He was married twice. His first wife was Margaret Haldeman. They were blessed with two children, Mary Ann and Catherine.

One beautiful autumn day tragedy befell this happy family as the mother was going to a neighbor's to attend a quilting party. In crossing a corner of the farm she was attacked by a half wild old sow, which had a litter of small pigs. The hog knocked her to the ground and tore out her intestines. Catherine as an old lady would tell how she saw her mother die in her father's arms.

Jacob Funk then married Susan Fretz, the daughter of Martin Fretz. She was born in 1802 and died in 1890 at the age of eighty-eight. To this union were born seven children, Margaret, Esther, John (our subject), Sarah, Abram (who also plays an important part), Jacob, and Susan.

In the meantime Jacob Funk had moved to the farm adjoining directly to the north. This was in the year 1835, the year that John F. Funk was born.

John was born April 6, 1835. To locate this farm geographically, starting from the village of Chalfont going north on route 152, passing through Newville, a small hamlet of eight or ten homes, and still going north on route 152, there are two unimproved roads leading off to the right. Taking the second dirt road, which winds along a lovely dale and a clear flowing brook, and following this winding road for a mile, you will come to the place where John F. Funk first saw the light of day. Here is a large rambling stone house with huge chimneys, and it could be seen that the barn had burned

down years ago. Seventy-five acres of land sloped to the south. I stood and mused to think that here was born a pioneer Mennonite leader so far off the beaten track. Can this be the place?

A man made his appearance and in high German asked what I wanted. In my broken German I tried to explain my mission. So we finally located his wife who could speak English.

To think that over this doorsill John F. Funk had trod many a summer day! I think that if John F. Funk could have come back he would have hung up his hat and felt at home. Entering a very large room with bare oak floors, and open joists in the ceiling, I saw a beautiful large open fireplace. The next room had even a larger open fireplace, and a beautiful winding stairway greeted my eyes.

I asked the lady if I might examine the deeds to this farm. Going to a large old-fashioned chest, she brought out the largest amount of deeds I have ever seen together and spread them out on the table. Some of these deeds were written on sheepskin. The first deeds were in pounds, shillings, and pence.

In 1779 the place was sold for \$835, and in the year 1835 Jacob Funk bought it from Michall Miller for \$2,000. So there is no doubt but this is John F. Funk's birthplace. As stated before, this place is off the beaten path but I was told that down along this dale with its babbling brook there had been a flourishing mill and creamery. In searching along the brook I finally came across the ruins of the creamery, and I could still trace the outline of the dam across the brook.

The road into this place had long since disappeared and grown up with trees. Old-timers say there was a day when the teams were lined up waiting for their turn to unload their milk and take feed along home.

John F. Funk undoubtedly took his place in this line. But today this onetime busy place has vanished, and in a few years will be forgotten. This was known as the Woodlawn Creamery Road.

So the place of his birth having been established, let us look into his education. When we study his books and writings we can see a master mind back of them. At this period of time, in the village of Line Lexington, at the south of the village there was located the Price Academy. The school has disappeared and only a depression in the ground marks the spot where the school stood. As John F. Funk's parents attended the Line Lexington Mennonite Church and the children of this period of time attended this academy, it is possible that John F. Funk received his early education here. Wherever he acquired his grade schooling, he also attended Freeland Seminary, now known as Ursinus College. He would go to school in the summer and teach in the winter. He taught at what was then known as the Chestnut Ridge School.

His teaching career started at the age of nineteen in the year 1854. To show his ability at learning, at the age of nine

he had memorized 1,600 Scripture verses. In that period of time school lasted four months. One of his pupils was Bishop Henry Rosenberger. While teaching here at Chestnut Ridge, to show his literary mind, he started to publish a journal of school life, neighborhood happenings, church events, etc., sending them along home with his pupils, which were well received by their parents, as reading matter was scarce in those days. He taught here at Chestnut Ridge for three years.

In the year 1858 he graduated from Bell and Stratton Commercial College in Chicago with honors. He was a student his entire life and a lover of good books of which he acquired a large library.

Mary Ann played a prominent place in the lives of the Funk boys, her brothers. She married a Jacob Beidler of Bedminster Township, Bucks County. This man was born in 1815 and died in 1893, at the age of eighty-three.

In 1844 he with Mary Ann decided to go west. They located in Chicago, then a frontier town. He was a shrewd businessman and saw the possibility of a growing town. He, therefore, went to the north of Chicago and bought large tracts of forest. These forests were the best that could be bought. In these forests he set up his sawmills. Here he cut his lumber and sent it to Chicago, where he had large lumberyards. The student of history will remember the Chicago fire, which was supposed to have been started by a cow kicking over a lantern. While Beidler's lumberyards were not touched, they were on the very edge of the fire. So we see that in order to rebuild, lumber and more lumber was needed and Beidler was in a position to supply it.

In the language of today we would say, "He cornered the market and cleaned up." He became very wealthy. I was told by an elderly man that he remembered when the Beidlers came east to visit. He described Beidler as a very large man with a beard trimmed to a point, nose pinchers on a black cord, driving the best livery team and refusing to eat with the hired help.

But Beidler was a good giver and at one time gave \$80,000 to one cause. One morning he was reading a paper when his secretary came in and informed him that one of his lumber camps had burned, amounting to a loss of \$16,000. He went on reading, not in the least bit excited. No wonder he lived to be eighty-three. He gave toward the Publishing House.

This man Beidler influenced John F. Funk to come to Chicago. So on April 11, 1857, John F. with \$60 in his pocket and two suits, left for Chicago. His mother's heart was heavy, and he made the statement that her prayers followed him. He went to his half sister in Chicago. His motive in going west was strictly business. If Jacob Beidler is making money in the lumber business, why not he? So John F. went into the lumber business.

At this point let us turn to his younger brother, Joseph. Born in 1840, he also

attended Freeland Seminary and Excelsior Normal School at Carversville. Monday morning they would walk the twelve miles to school, board there during the week, and Friday evening would walk the twelve miles home. At the age of eighteen Joseph was teaching school. Joseph taught in the winter and farmed in the summer. These men were born leaders. News came back from Chicago that John was making money in the lumber business. Joseph was influenced to go to Chicago and also engaged in the lumber business in the year 1863.

A younger brother, Jacob, followed his two older brothers west to Chicago and for a few years engaged in the lumber business, then decided to go still farther west. There is very little known of Jacob. One of his daughters was very well educated as a teacher of German and lived in Germany for a number of years, studying the German language.

When John F. Funk arrived in Chicago, the following Sunday a neighbor boy, by the name of Lord, invited John F. along to a mission Sunday school. Lord was a teacher in this school and John F. accompanied him to Sunday school. In Pennsylvania there were no Sunday schools at this time and they were looked upon as dangerous. Another teacher in this mission Sunday school was D. L. Moody, whom Funk soon learned to know and like. The influence of D. L. Moody on Funk soon showed its results. He became a pupil in one school, a teacher in the second, and a superintendent in the third. At this time he was not yet baptized. While he was working with Moody in Sunday-school work and tract distribution he considered it the high spot of his life.

On one of these missions, they wandered into a church where a young people's meeting was being held. This is where the Mennonite Church received the idea for young people's meetings. Here in these Sunday schools Funk learned public speaking. He promised God if He would spare his life that he would visit his old home and congregation at Line Lexington, Bucks County, and there be baptized.

He taught a Sunday-school class for two years before he was baptized. In 1859 at the age of twenty-four he visited his parents. In the church where he as a boy had listened to sermons in German, which he could also speak fluently, he was baptized and received into the Mennonite Church at this time, although he had been converted in the Presbyterian Church. This shows his parental training and its influence on his life.

In the year 1861 he was elected superintendent of the Milwaukee Depot Mission Sunday School. This was a work he promoted and enjoyed. In 1863 he had two visitors, Peter Nissley from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and John Brenneman from Ohio. This we would not think so strange, but John F. Funk did some sweating over what to do on Sunday morning. Would these men go to Sunday

school? A lot of people were bitterly opposed to Sunday schools in those days. John was a diplomat and persuaded them to go along to Sunday school. Afterwards he remarked that they seemed to enjoy it very much.

Brenneman went along home with John F. Funk overnight, where Funk showed him a book that he was writing at this time on war, its evils and our duty. This was at the time of the Civil War. Brenneman encouraged him to publish it, which he did, and it was well received in the Mennonite Church. This was his first publication and was published in 1863.

He was very much concerned that our church had so little literature and especially no church paper. In 1836 Henry Bertolet, of Skippack, a Mennonite preacher, started a church paper. He came out with one issue and was stopped by opposition. Funk thought over this matter and had a burning zeal for this work. He started preparation for a church paper. He had no encouragement, no help, no outside funds, and no mailing list but he had plenty of opposition. In January, 1864, the first edition of our church paper was off the press and ready to be mailed. It had four pages 10 x 15 inches and cost one dollar per year. It was entitled *Herald of Truth*. The paper was born in a raging snowstorm, 30 degrees below zero, and the trains did not run for three days. It seemed that even the forces of nature were against him. But Funk's heart was warm and he promised God if he would have a thousand subscriptions the first year, he would continue, and he had twelve hundred.

In January, 1867, he had enlarged it to sixteen pages 9 x 12 and by this time he had fifteen hundred English and one thousand German subscriptions. This was in Chicago, and at this time he was not yet married. He was almost too busy to think of getting married. All the Funk boys came back to Bucks County for wives. On January 19, 1864, John came back to Bucks County and was married to Salome Kratz of Hilltown by Isaac Meyers of Deep Run. They lived together for fifty-four years and six children blessed their family.

Let us remember that he was engaged in the lumber business ten hours a day for six days of the week and published the church paper at night. He would work, write, and then print by a hand lever press. He would get so tired that he would lie down on the floor and sleep for an hour or two, then get up and go to work. He would work as long as twenty hours a day. His early training helped him stand these long hours.

He also established a tablet factory as a side line to supply paper for his printery.

Chalfont, Pennsylvania.



A Collection and Presentation of Genealogical Data

George S. Hunsberger

In order to be informed as accurately as possible about our family backgrounds it is necessary to have written, documented, and accurate records of our ancestors. With this thought in mind many persons have set down for posterity the records of their families.

How does one start to collect data for a genealogy? Donald Parker lists several sources of information and several beginning points. Listed here are many sources to be used as a beginning, including those suggested by Parker.

1. Telephone directories.
2. Family traditions, oral and written recollections.
3. Family Bibles.
4. Gravestones.
5. Family relationships.
6. Wills.
7. Deeds.
8. Mortgages.
9. Birth records.
10. Newspaper articles: social, stories, death and birth notices.
11. Death records, and burial records.
12. Historical societies.
13. Local history.
14. War registers.
15. U.S. census records, 1790-1880.

The historian will find vast quantities of material from these sources and before he has collected too much data he will realize that a very flexible and understandable filing system is needed. For this reason he must select working aids that are not too cumbersome, not too hard to understand. Yet no matter how clear and neat a form may be, there are some who will not understand it. The writer's father was visiting a family in Switzerland in 1938, and the conversation was on a formal level until the householder realized that the visitor was the same person who had mailed a form to be filled and returned to the United States way back in 1925. He then went into his house, brought out the form, and said, "Now you can help me fill in this form." The record a historian needs to keep always on hand is the permanent record. In recording the permanent information, a pattern must be developed that will be maintained when the work is sent to the printer.

Some historians, in recording a family history, have deemed it necessary and essential to include paragraphs or pages about the spouses of the family tree personnel. Such deflections from the dominant theme tend to slow down the story, and also to swamp the reader with facts and stories not of fundamental information about the family members. The easiest method to use to note the consort stories is by footnotes. Further, if a consort's history is recorded in a separate geneal-

ogy, there is no need to transcribe all the information there into the new tome, for a footnote referring to that genealogy will suffice, and the interested reader will get the other book and read the information he wishes to read. By footnotes and references to other works the reader is enabled to keep his mind on the true purpose of the present volume; to present the family data of the _____ family, and this presentation is then in readable style, without deflections and vagaries.

The collecting of data is the most tedious part of the whole process, and also the most time consuming. One day the writer's father asked that a trip be made to a certain graveyard where we would find a gravestone of a particular person. From this stone we were to copy the birth and death dates. The writer and a cousin made this trip, and after plodding up and down the rows of stones several times we admitted we missed seeing the stone. We went to the caretaker's home, and he had a chart of all the stones and the inscriptions thereon. A cursory glance at this list did not disclose the name. However, when we took the list home and used a ruler to guide our eyes down the pages we found the name we were looking for and were able to copy the necessary information. The search took more than eight hours, mainly because our eyes played tricks on us.

One way to collect data is to prepare an information blank. This may be called an inquiry blank, or a personal record. The information supplied on these personal record forms can then be transcribed onto the permanent record forms. Every time a new form is received it is necessary to arrange it in the order of the number assigned to that name. These forms are sent out to known relatives and the numbers inserted by the historian before they leave his office. Hence the job of sorting them numerically is easy.

In collecting the personal record information on the Hunsberger family, many times questions were unanswered or hazy answers were given. In those cases follow-up sheets were sent to the persons, and they were asked to clear up the item indicated on the sheet.

One of the hardest problems to solve is the birth order of the families born one hundred or more years ago. It was, and still is, in some families, the custom to record all the boys first, and then all the girls. This put the people chronologically out of order in most cases, because most families are not born this way. My great-grandfather's family had been recorded in this manner, and the proper order was gotten, not by correspondence, but by a visit to the cousins in Indiana. There one of the cousins told the historian that he did not have them in the right order. He then asked for the correct order and was not too surprised to be told that one of the daughters was born first.

Due to reticence on the part of these Mennonite folks to write things down, there is a strong possibility that many families are not chronologically accurate,

not only in the Hunsberger record, but also in the Mast, Moyer, Fretz, and Kratz records as well.

After as much information has been collected about the families as possible, the historian may find a family member who has made an outstanding achievement or done something special that would be of interest to the other members of the family. In this case the historian will send to this family member a blank asking for a short biography of the person named thereon.

At long last, oftentimes several decades after the record was started, the historian has filled practically all the gaps in the genealogy and is now ready to present to the world the record of his research, findings, and family ties.

The biggest problem confronting the historian is how to show relationships. Brothers and sisters generally are easy, but how do you best show different generations? One way is to give each generation a number, viz., First Generation, Second Generation, ad infinitum, as is done in the *Mast Family History*. Another way is to indicate different generations by Roman numerals, viz., I, II, III, ad infinitum, as is done in the Moyer, Fretz, and Kratz records. Then another way is to give each person a different number, viz., 323, 631; 323, 631, 3; 323, 631, 31, ad infinitum, as is done in the Hunsberger record. Further, some genealogies have no generation indicated at all. Such is the record compiled by the Historical Research Bureau, Washington, D.C., of the Hunsberger family.

To present the material to the family members and to the public is the individual responsibility of the historian. He must choose the form in which to present the material. Once this form is chosen, it must be consistent throughout. Gilbert Harry Doane, in his book *Searching for Your Ancestors* (McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc., 1937), gives us a very elaborate method on page 177 of how to arrange a genealogy. He wants every statement documented, and a list of general references used in building up the history of this generation of the family.

As this writer sees it, this form of genealogy presentation would definitely take away from the trend of the story, for most records are made by the family members; and on the personal record blanks, this information should be recorded, but there is no necessity to put all the documentary comments in the history. Give a general description in the introduction as to how most of the history was collected, and then if there is special documentation for statements in the history proper, such can be done by footnotes.

Donald D. Parker, in his book *Local History*, on page 12, states: Family histories are of all sorts and of all degrees of accuracy. Doane warns against the genealogies, some of them very pretentious, which have been gotten up often at great expense to satisfy family pride but without much regard for accuracy. Such books are never to be judged by their

bindings or their size. (Doane: *Searching for Your Ancestors*, 64.)

In summing up the presentation of genealogical data, we state that the historian must present his data in a clear, orderly, and interesting manner, with enough family anecdotes, stories, and doings well intermingled with the family listings, so that the dry listings will not become boring to the reader. Every historian would do well to keep in mind this question: "What would an intelligent outsider want to know about this community or about this subject?" (D. D. Parker, *Local History*, p. X.)

Amish in North Dakota

Floyd E. Kauffman

The spirit of adventure captured more than a few Amish farmers during the frontier days. Many were minded to leave their friends and their well-established communities in the eastern states to take up the hard task of pioneering on the Great Plains. A periodic surge of interest in colonization was sometimes caused by unrest and "church trouble" in the home community. With a keen eye for fertile land, a love for a peaceful and unmolested habitation, and with fearless attempts at hard work, this restless spirit led the Amishman to some of the remote parts of the country. Of the sixteen states which now contain established Old Order Amish communities, North Dakota was one of the last to be the recipient of the Amish.

A wave of interest in colonization to North Dakota began to manifest itself among the Amish in Indiana in 1893, and in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, about 1896. A delegation of Amishmen from Elkhart County, Indiana, consisting of Reuben E. Bontreger, Eli J. Bontreger, R. A. Yoder, J. A. Miller and D. D. Kauffman visited North Dakota in 1893. They were favorably impressed with the vast area of level country and the exceptional opportunities offered to home seekers; and they decided to recommend the Turtle mountain district in Rolette County for prospective settlers. In the spring of 1894 four families from Indiana moved to North Dakota, namely, R. A. Yoder, John D. Bontreger, Joni Hersberger, M. H. Hochstedler, and a single man, John A. Yoder. These families settled near Rolla in Rolette County, but they later moved to the Island Lake region near Mayo and Wolford.

In 1895 a mass movement of immigrants to North Dakota began, including many members of the Church of the Brethren as well as Amish, from several counties in Indiana and from Ohio and Kansas. Eli J. Bontreger, who was ordained a minister in 1894, and R. L. Bontreger left Indiana, and with their families, moved to North Dakota in 1895.

Several families in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, became interested in the Dakotas about 1900. Jonas Renno, who owned and operated the Renno Mill near

Belleville, moved there in 1898, and with a great deal of enthusiasm succeeded in getting a small following. Aaron Yoder, who married Renno's daughter, established his home there in 1901. A few bachelors from Mifflin County also went with the movement. While holding evangelistic meetings in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, in January, 1903, D. D. Miller learned of a considerable group of Mennonites and Amishmen who were contemplating moving to North Dakota. At the suggestion of Brother Miller, the two valley congregations, Belleville and Allensville, met jointly on March 1, 1903, and ordained I. S. Mast to serve as minister for the new congregation about to move to Dakota. This group boarded the train at Reedsville, Pennsylvania, on March 30, 1903, and arrived at Surrey, North Dakota, on April 2.

Among the families from Nebraska who moved to North Dakota were David Yoder and his single brother Michael Yoder, Solomon Yoder, and Isaac Kauffman.

For more than eight years after the first group of Amish established themselves in North Dakota, many families moved to Rolette and Pierce counties from several states. Most of them filed claims on government land. The Amish settlement in North Dakota probably reached its apex in 1903 when there were about fifty families in the settlement, and the church was divided into two districts.

Now, after fifty years, Amish life in North Dakota is almost extinct. Already in 1903 the trek to other states began. In 1909 there was a large exodus when many families moved to Colorado to settle on government land. Others moved to Indiana, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Montana. The reasons for the disintegration of the Amish community which seemed to have been so promising are varied. The long severe winters, with much sub-zero weather and deep snow, discouraged many families. The limited medical and community service caused some anxiety, and many wives, unable to adjust themselves to the new environment, persuaded their husbands to return to their former homes. It is suggested that many came to North Dakota, made their fortune, and then moved away.

The Old Order Amish community has lost its distinctiveness as such because many of the members joined the Lakeview Mennonite congregation, organized in 1916. A large share of the 102 members now comprising the Lakeview congregation are of Amish descent.

Eli J. Bontreger served as bishop of the church from 1895 to 1910, when he moved to Wisconsin. Abe Graber was ordained bishop in 19— to succeed Eli Bontreger, and in 19— Abe Gingerich was ordained bishop to succeed Graber. Eli J. Bontreger at the request of the North Dakota Amish continued to assist the congregation, visiting the church every two years until 1936 when Mahlon L. Yoder was ordained bishop. Church life was not satisfactory for many years. The constant drain of families moving out as

well as a few moving in did not help to strengthen the community. The Amish Church in North Dakota now has only eight members, and Mahlon L. Yoder is the present minister and bishop. See "County Status Aided by Amish Mennonites," in *Turtle Mountain Star* (June 22, 1938), Rolla, N. Dak., p. 58.

The Robson-Funk Correspondence

John F. Funk as editor of the *Herald of Truth* was very active in arousing the interest of American Mennonites in behalf of Mennonites in Russia, who in the 1870's were seeking a new home in America in order to escape military service in their homeland. He not only carried on a correspondence with the Russian Mennonite leaders but also kept in touch with individuals and organizations interested in giving economic aid to needy Mennonite immigrants. As treasurer of the Mennonite Board of Guardians, organized to assist Mennonite immigrants, he handled thousands of dollars loaned or donated to the cause of the Board. For a complete account of his activities, see Kempes Schnell, "John F. Funk, 1835-1930, and the Mennonite Migration of 1873-1875," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, July, 1950.

But Funk's correspondence was not limited to Mennonites. English Friends, too, were interested in the plight of the Mennonites in Russia and came to their aid as is proved by the two letters below, from the Funk correspondence in the Archives of the Mennonite Church. For a more complete discussion of the relationships of the Friends and Mennonites, see Owen Gingerich, "Relations Between the Russian Mennonites and the Friends During the Nineteenth Century," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October, 1951.

—M. G.

Dalton
W. Huddersfield
14. 1. 75

Dear Friend John F. Funk

A good deal of sympathy and fellow feeling has been felt, as might be expected, by members of the Society of Friends on behalf of the Mennonite Emigrants from South Russia, driven away from their homes on account of their faithfulness in their testimony against War.

In the last no. of the *Herald of Truth* it was stated that several of them, especially in Dakota, have been suffering much privation and are likely to need assistance during the winter and I have been requested to forward the enclosed £60 as a donation for this special object—viz. £50 from Thos. Harvey and 10£ from Hector Rich.

Not being certain that our dear friend Cornelius Janzen is at home at present and thinking that prompt assistance is required, I thought I might venture to ask thee kindly to take charge of it, not doubting that thou wilt take care that it is properly applied.

I do not forget thy kindness to me when at Elkhart and have often thought with interest of the meeting we attended in the country.

I believe I am also indebted to thee for sending me the "Herald of Truth" in the perusal of which I have been much interested. Mennonites and Friends have so much in common that there is much of a feeling of brotherhood which it is very desirable to encourage.

I shall be obliged by acknowledgment of the enclosed £60 and remain

with kind regard thy friend

Isaac Robson

(From the John F. Funk collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church)

Dalton
Huddersfield
25. III. 75

Dear Friend, John Funk

I have now the pleasure of forwarding Bill at 21 days for £140, making altogether £200 sent to thy care for the assistance of the needy Mennonite Emigrants.

The object of this subscription, I think thou wilt understand, is not to assist emigration, which seems already provided for by Mennonites in America, but for the relief of those already in America, who are reduced to want, either by providing seed or the supply of present bodily wants.

I do not know whether there has been any correspondence between our friend Cornelius Janzen and thyself as to the appropriation of this money, but as a considerable amount has been sent to him, perhaps it might be well that you shall have an understanding between you, so that you may not interfere with each other's field of distribution.

It has been a great pleasure to me to have met in our own community so ready and hearty a sympathy with those who are suffering for their testimony against war so nobly.

With very kind regards, I remain thy assured friend,

Isaac Robson

(From the John F. Funk collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church)

NEWS AND NOTES

Glenn D. Everett, 1253 National Press Building, Washington, D.C., is writing a book on the Amish, to be entitled "God's Plain People." Photographer Lloyd Jones is producing the illustrations for the book. Everett writes, "Our refusal to try to sneak any pictures and our insistence on explaining to the Amish bishops exactly what we are doing and why we are there is winning a surprising amount of co-operation from them." Following the Chicago political conventions, which he covered, Everett spent a number of days in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library doing research for his book and now plans to come back to Goshen for additional study.

Sheldon Madeira, a teacher in the Philadelphia public schools, spent a number of days during the past summer working in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library on his doctoral dissertation entitled "A Study of Amish Education in Pennsylvania."

Robert Kreider's dissertation on the relations of the Anabaptists to the civil authorities in Switzerland and south Germany has been completed for his degree at Chicago University. During the school year, Kreider spent a number of periods of study in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library.

Dr. Gunnar Westin, Head of the Department of Church History, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, spent several days in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library during the past summer doing research on Anabaptism and spiritualism in Reformation times. Dr. Westin was pleased to find sources here which he had been unable to locate in the libraries of Europe.

Dr. E. K. Francis of Notre Dame University is continuing his research on the Mennonites of Manitoba. During the past year he has done work on his forthcoming book at the Bethel College Historical Library and at Goshen College.

James Rensser and Daniel J. Graber, students at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Chicago, did research in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library. Frederick Wright used the Goshen library for his master's thesis at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary on the subject "The Views of Baptism of the Biblical Anabaptists of Switzerland and the Netherlands."

Ira E. Miller of Eastern Mennonite College is working on his doctoral dissertation at Temple University on the theme "The Development of the Present Status of Mennonite Secondary and Higher Education in the United States and Canada."

Leroy Kennel during the past school year wrote as his master's thesis at the University of Iowa "A Rhetorical Criticism of Three Sermons by John S. Coffman: Nineteenth Century Mennonite Educator and Evangelist."

David Wedel, President of Bethel College, received his doctor of theology degree from the Iliff School of Theology on August 21, 1952. His dissertation subject was "Contributions of C. H. Wedel to the Mennonite Church Through Education."

D. Paul Miller has been working at the University of Nebraska on a sociological study of the Mennonite community at Beatrice, Nebraska.

Grant M. Stoltzfus is continuing his research on the earliest Amish community in America, the one near present Morgantown, Pa.

Charles B. Hirsch wrote a master's thesis at Indiana University in 1949 on the conscientious objectors in Indiana during World War II. Three revised chapters of the thesis appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, Bloomington, Indiana, beginning in March 1950. The three

chapters are entitled "Conscientious Objectors in Indiana During World War II," "Indiana Churches and Conscientious Objectors During World War II," and "The Civilian Public Service Camp Program in Indiana."

Conscription and Conscience. The American State and the Conscientious Objector, 1940-1947 was recently published by the Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y. The authors are M. Q. Sibley, University of Minnesota, and P. E. Jacob, University of Pennsylvania.

Ira Stoner Franck has recently published two pamphlets under the title *A Jaunt into the Dutch Country*. The first one, 28 pages, carries as its subtitle "Accent on the Amish" and the second one, 35 pages, "Accent on the Mennonites." Mr. Franck uses these in connection with his guided tours of Lancaster County.

We Enter Puerto Rico, a 95-page booklet by Gladys Widmer, was recently published by the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Elkhart, Indiana.

John D. Unruh's *In the Name of Christ. A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and Its Service 1920-1951* was published recently by the Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa.

Justus G. Holsinger's *Serving Rural Puerto Rico. A History of Eight Years of Service by the Mennonite Church* has been published by the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pa.

John G. Rempel's *Jubiläum-Album der Konferenz der Mennoniten in Canada, 1902-1952*, 73 pages, was recently published at Rosthern, Sask.

J. Winfield Fretz's report on his study of the Mennonites in Paraguay is now in press at Scottsdale, Pa. It will appear as a full-size book under the title "Pilgrims in Paraguay."

Cornelius Krahn's articles on the history of the Old Colony Mennonites will appear in book form in 1953. Dr. Krahn is now engaged in study and research in Europe but will return to Bethel College in October.

Herbert Wiebe's *Das Siellingswerk niederländischer Mennoniten im Weichseltal Zwischen Fordon und Weissenberg bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts* was published in 1952 by the J. G. Herder-Institut, Marburg a.d. Lahn.

The 27-page article on "The Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College" which appeared in the October 1951 *Mennonite Quarterly Review* has been reprinted and is available from the Mennonite Historical Society, Goshen, Indiana. This study revealed that the Historical Library is receiving annually 190 Mennonite periodicals and other serials. The article contains a bibliography of all books in the library published before 1600, a total of 134. The total number of volumes in the Historical Library, not counting bound periodicals, was 6249. At least 800 of these are classed as rare books.

During the past year, the following boxes of materials have been added to the collection housed in the archives reserved

for the Mennonite Church in the Goshen College Library.

Division I—Mennonite General Conference—1 box
Division II—District Conferences—5 boxes
Division III—Local congregations—3 boxes
Division V—Mennonite Board of Education—19 boxes
Division VII—Organizations Below District Conference Level—2 boxes
Division IX—Mennonite Central Committee—35 boxes
Historical Manuscripts Division—61 boxes

Book Reviews

High Bright Buggy Wheels, by Luella Creighton: Dodd, Mead & Company, New York, N.Y., 1951. 342 pp. \$3.00.

High Bright Buggy Wheels is the story of a "Mennonite" girl and her struggle to choose between the Mennonite way of life and the life of the non-Mennonite society around her. It is set in southern Ontario in the days of the early automobile.

A narrative that includes the unspoken thoughts of its characters, as well as their spoken words, is in a sense a psychological study. An individual from one environment cannot easily transfer himself psychologically into an environment that is completely different from his own. To do so at all requires much research and much skill. Mrs. Creighton has chosen this almost impossible task. She has done surprisingly well in interpreting some of the psychology of Christian nonconformity—the reactions of those who have been reared in an atmosphere of Christian separation from the world. The reader who comes from such a background will find the book speaking directly to his own experience at times. On the other hand, however, he finds other parts of the story which do not ring true at all. In the end, he comes to the conclusion that Mrs. Creighton is always the "outsider" looking in and never completely understanding the society which she attempts to describe.

In other respects, Mrs. Creighton indicates a certain lack of acquaintance with the people of whom she writes. The "Mennonites" in her story are certainly not the Mennonites as they are known in Canada today. Not being a Mennonite, however, the author no doubt thinks of Mennonites in general, without singling out any one of the more than a dozen branches. To her, a person may have been a Mennonite, whether he were a member of the Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Amish Mennonite Church, or the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, all of which are to be found in southern Ontario. Oddly enough, she seems to have singled out the last of these four as the "Mennonites" about whom she has written, probably without being aware that they no longer bear the name Mennonite in Canada and most of the United States, but are now

known as the United Missionary Church. Or she may be thinking of the Brethren in Christ Church, which has many similarities to the Mennonite groups. If either of these two is the group of which she writes, camp meetings, free testimony in public services, kneeling in prayer upon entering the meetinghouse, and other practices are no doubt authentic for the period of which she writes. One would question, though, the fact that her "Mennonite" women wear the prayer veiling at home, but wear their bonnets in church. From the absence of references to the doctrine of the prayer veiling in the disciplines of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church of that time, one would infer that they had discontinued the wearing of the prayer veiling by the time of the story. The Brethren in Christ women still wear the prayer veiling and the bonnet, but they would remove their bonnets during the worship service. As nearly as I could ascertain, the family names are more characteristic of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ group.

Regardless of the literary merits or demerits of her book, Luella Creighton has done the Mennonites the disservice of adding to the confusion of the general public in regard to the different branches of Mennonites. The person not acquainted with distinctions between these groups will say, "These are the Mennonites." The Mennonite reader will say, "These are not Mennonites," and he will resent the confusion which the book increases.

N. P. Springer

Goshen College

The Mennonite Church in the Second World War, by Guy F. Hershberger. Mennonite Publishing House, 1951. 308 pp. \$3.50.

In his facile style Dr. Hershberger has again demonstrated his ability to take a segment of church history and make it relive before the reader in portrait fashion. The clarity of style and the careful treatment of all kinds of data makes this another volume equal in value, for the period covered, to its worthy predecessor, *War, Peace, and Nonresistance*.

The introductory chapter entitled "The Peace Problems Committee," supplies an excellent background for an understanding of the succeeding chapters. The vision, wisdom, and tact employed by the leadership of the church during this critical period in working out a practical peace program is commendable, far beyond what was accomplished during World War I.

As one reads through chapters two to seven inclusive he is impressed with the author's understanding of the total non-resistant and peace program as it worked in actual operation. The chapters contain much basic materials of permanent value.

During chapter eight the author takes time out to point up what he considers

a weakness in the CPS program. The title of this chapter is "Spiritual Ministry to the CPS Men." While conscientious efforts were made to supply the spiritual needs to men in CPS camps, there was still much lacking from the standpoint of regularity of spiritual ministrations.

If the reader desires to know the attitude of conference and church leaders toward those of our brethren who took up military service he will find excellent statements in chapter nine.

In the next two chapters there is a factual yet vivid description of the extent to which nonresistance was tested. No one who took the nonresistant position escaped being put under test in some form or other, whether by responsible or irresponsible citizenry. These tests came under different labels, but they were tests nevertheless. This chapter like most others is a real eye-opener.

Too briefly stated, chapters twelve to fourteen is an excellent description of how our vision of peace and service was enlarged; of the adjustments made and our contribution to the cause of peace expanded. All these changes and activities resulted in the deepening of convictions and consecrations to services of various kinds during postwar days. This part of the story is ably portrayed in the two chapters dealing with "Ministry to War Sufferers" and "Mennonite Service Units."

The statements on "Peace Literature" and "Peace Teaching" produced during this period of stress and strain are again a substantiation of the old adage, "Necessity is the mother of invention." As is shown vividly in chapters seventeen and eighteen "Peace Literature" and "Peace Teaching" was produced in almost mushroom fashion.

Chapter nineteen contains much wisdom. The author stresses the need of church loyalty, but beyond this loyalty there is much value derived from co-operating with other peace groups who cannot always see eye to eye in detail. Dangers of such procedure are carefully pointed up, yet as the author points out on page 269, "It is the writer's belief, however, that CPS experience of the men in camp, and the church as a whole, gained rather than lost in their understanding of nonresistance, and in the commitment to the same." It would seem that with this cautious evaluation careful thinkers would concur.

The last chapter of the book is also true to its title, "Summary and Evaluation." It is an excellent review and contains many constructive suggestions for the future peace program of the Mennonite Church.

The table of contents and a good index makes this a ready reference book for future writers and speakers. Limitation of space prevented the insertion, here, of even a few of the many helpful quotations and meaningful figures and other data. Our thanks are due to the sponsoring

Peace Problems Committee and to Dr. Hershberger for assembling in one volume so much valuable information of this period of Mennonite history. Not only Mennonites, but all peace loving non-resistant Christians, will find time and money profitably spent to read *The Mennonite Church in the Second World War*.

Walter E. Oswald

Hesston College.

Wings of Decision, by Eunice Shellenberger. Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa., 1951. 240 pp. \$2.75.

Wings of Decision is a piece of fiction written to help young people in making decisions for God, particularly in attitudes toward military service. The author presents convincing arguments for the non-resistant position. She shows the difficulties faced by a young man who takes a stand as a conscientious objector in a community swept by war hysteria. Also she pictures the disastrous results which may follow an effort to compromise one's convictions. In a more positive vein she stresses the fact that a life of service dedicated to God and humanity is the only logical course for the Christian young person who has seen something of the need of a war-torn world.

Mrs. Shellenberger has succeeded in presenting material which accomplishes her purpose, "to strengthen the convictions of your young people with the knowledge that the Christ way is the only way to true happiness and success."

The leading character, David Sheppard, and his friend Jerry are convincing persons. From the very beginning they reveal themselves as real boys, whether it is in their wistful daydreams of becoming pilots or in their contacts with the other boys and girls in school activities. Later, as they face the draft issue, Jerry's compromising attitude and his final abandonment of his convictions are credible because from the first we have been prepared to expect some instability. Likewise, David's courage and decisiveness are plausible because of his careful home training and his own purposeful attitude toward life. However, Jerry remains a likable young fellow though weak, and David's struggles with fears and discouragement keep him from being too good to be a real person.

David's further experiences are similar to those of many young men in CPS days. The author depicts with understanding the emotions of an energetic young man in work which often seems inconsequential. David's growth in spiritual life and the development of his deeper convictions for service are presented naturally as the outgrowth of his experiences. The development of this part of the story is altogether plausible with no effort to capitalize on dramatic or spectacular events.

In the love element the story becomes less realistic. The two girls are the conventional figures of Christian fiction—the loyal and noble heroine who deserves to be loved and the pretty, flighty rival who

attracts the hero by her charm and then disappoints him. The final surprise meeting of David and Peggy in a relief center in Europe is hardly credible. One cannot believe that two persons could have been assigned to the same project without either being aware of the other's appointment.

Another weakness of the story is in the portrayal of adults. David's parents and his Sunday-school teacher usually talk in stilted artificial language, especially when they are giving advice or explaining Christian ideals. It seems that in her effort to indoctrinate thoroughly, the author has sometimes sacrificed naturalness.

In spite of these faults the book as a whole is well written. The author's style is clear and direct. She has succeeded in making the leading character and most of the events of his life seem real. Skillful use is made of the unifying theme of the wingless planes which Dave and Jerry tattooed on their arms as a symbol of their ambition and of the spiritual interpretation which David attached to the symbol. Above all, the book is significant as a challenge to young Christians. It should be recommended to Mennonite young people and it can be read with profit by adults who are concerned with the problems of youth.

Eastern Mennonite College

A. Grace Wenger

In the Name of Christ: A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and Its Service 1920-1951, by John D. Unruh. Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., 1952. 404 pp. \$3.75.

In the Name of Christ is the story of the interesting beginning and remarkable growth and work of the Mennonite Central Committee. This agency came into being in 1920, a result of concern for the suffering of Mennonite people in Russia, and since that time it has grown to be the major service channel for the 175,000 Mennonites of Canada and the United States. The author attempts to give an accurate account of the work of this organization.

The opening section of the book presents a brief sketch of the 425-year history of the Mennonite Church. Concern for suffering and the desire to alleviate that suffering was the logical expression of the Mennonite heritage. Since the various groups wished their efforts to reflect the name and spirit of Christ, the MCC was conceived as the most desirable way through which they could give expression to this Christian conviction. The author briefly reviews the early relief efforts in Russia and the subsequent role of the MCC in finding new homes for the refugees. World War II brought new assignments, including peace education and contact work with the government and the Civilian Public Service program, which are given brief treatment. The tremendous expansion of the relief effort as the cries of war-suffering people reached and moved the hearts of the brotherhood is a most revealing story. God did not let

our people rest until there was an outpouring of money, supplies, and workers, hitherto unseen in our church. The tragic story of our refugee brethren and of the ministry of the MCC in this area receives careful treatment. The outreach into voluntary service and mental health services is also recorded. The values which came to our own brotherhood through these efforts receive compelling attention in the concluding section of the book. Some of these values might be listed as renewed sensitivity to spiritual and physical need, greater appreciation and understanding among the various Mennonite groups, a consciousness of world affairs and world Mennonitism, an opening of new doors for mission work, and an awareness of the continuing task before us.

This report to the Mennonite churches on the work of the agency which they have created should receive wide circulation. The information in this history will be of inestimable value through the coming years as further attempts are made to evaluate and interpret the spirit and work of the MCC. There are excellent summary charts on the amount of relief supplies, budgets, and expenditures. The list of MCC personnel given at the various places increases the value of the book.

There will be some readers who will feel that certain aspects of the work have been overemphasized and others not given sufficient treatment. Some may differ with certain of the author's conclusions such as the statement that "health service in Puerto Rico proved to be one of the most satisfying experiences in all relief work. . . ." There may be a few who will feel that the book is too factual and not sufficiently interpretative and evaluative. Nevertheless, it is the most comprehensive and accurate account of the work of this important servant of the church yet available. In a day in which many of us know far too little about the extensive work of our MCC during its short history, Brother Unruh's book will make a most significant contribution. If we are to continue to make the MCC an effective channel of witness and service, all of us need to know its past development that we may better support it in the role which it will continue to play in our church life of today.

Goshen College

Atlee Beechy

Serving Rural Puerto Rico, by Justus G. Holsinger. Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa., 1952. 226 pp. \$2.75.

Serving Rural Puerto Rico is the story of the birth and growth of a Mennonite service and mission project. The author is well qualified to write because he saw many significant changes in the progress of the work there. He was one of the first Mennonite workers on the island in 1944. He experienced the struggles and pleasures in the founding of the work there for three years. After teaching for two years in the States, he returned for a period of three and one-half additional years. During the last term, he saw the

transfer of the service project of La Plata from the Mennonite Central Committee to the Mennonite Relief Committee and a definite work of evangelization begun there.

Puerto Rico is a beautiful island located in a chain of islands in the Caribbean Sea. It is an island thirty miles wide and one hundred miles long, a beautiful creation in scenic beauty, but it is also a very needy overpopulated area, with resultant poverty which brings malnutrition and, in some instances, sluggishness. As you read the book you are not allowed to forget the good and worth-while qualities of our Puerto Rican neighbor. He is a sincere, hospitable person and often has much ambition. In reality, he is poor because he was born poor. Although he has done much for himself despite his poverty, still his needs are great.

One need of the Puerto Rican is the physical need, as noted above. The first Civilian Public Service men were sent there by the government of the United States to help alleviate this problem. The islanders were given aid in agricultural, medical, and community services. This aid was appreciated very much by the people.

The CPS men were located on the island just a short time when they realized that the fundamental need was a spiritual one. Most of the Puerto Rican people are church members, the greater percentage of them being baptized in the Catholic Church. By the daily living of the members of the service project, people began to notice that these people were different, living according to the teachings of Jesus. At first the workers were under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. Though they were not forbidden to engage in formal religious instruction, they realized that any disagreement coming from such a program might cause Selective Service to withdraw service units from the island and therefore the doors would be closed to a definite mission program following the war. Also in the beginning the language problem was a hindrance in the teaching of the religious program.

The mission program was launched in Pulguillas in December 1945, when the Paul Lauvers arrived. In La Plata it definitely started with the arrival of the Lester Hershey family in April 1947. Later mission stations were begun in Rabanal, Palo Hincado, Cuchilla, Penon, and Coamo Arriba. There are now over two hundred members in the Mennonite Church of Puerto Rico and many more are hearing the Gospel of salvation.

This book is a very accurate account and brings enjoyable reminiscences to those of us who have served there. For others it is an excellent basis for a private or group study of one of our newer mission fields. It would be invaluable as a background for those who are interested in a term of service in Puerto Rico. For all of us, the book helps us to pray more effectively for the work and the workers in this tiny island.

Akron, Pa.

Paul A. Leatherman

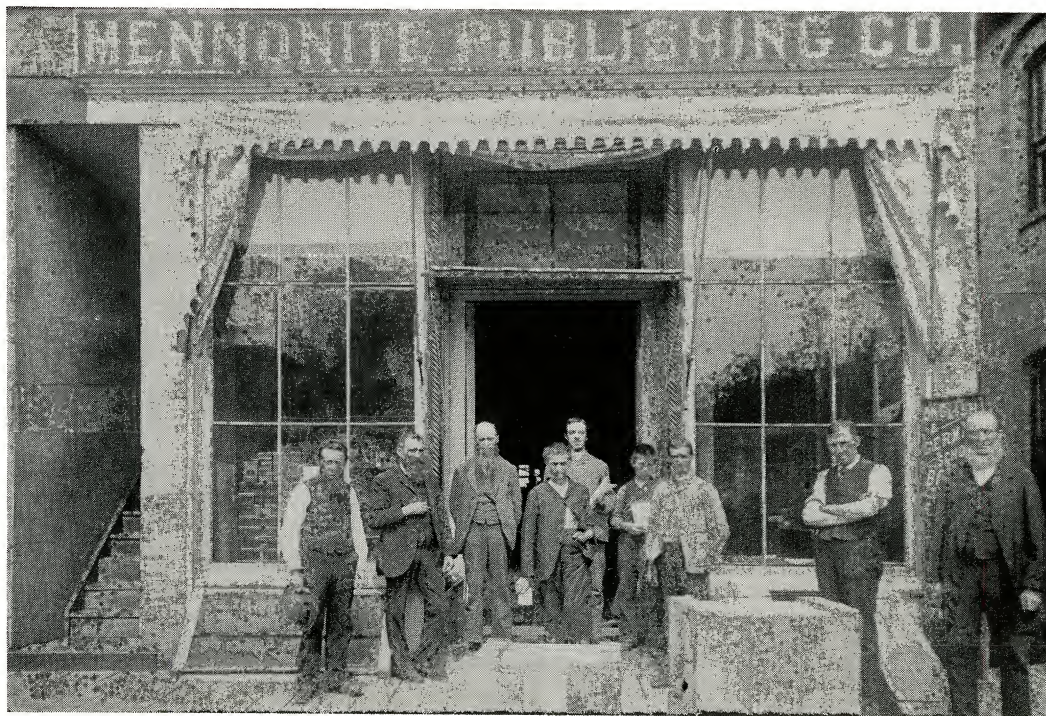
MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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Employees of the Mennonite Publishing Co., Elkhart, Ind., 1886

Left to right: John F. Funk, Jacob Oberholzer, Abram K. Funk, James Garlinger, Abram B. Kolb, Samuel Fred Coffman, Nelson Blough, Louis Rutter, Joseph Summers. (From an old photograph in the John F. Funk Collection, Mennonite Church Archives, Goshen, Ind.)

The Later Years of John F. Funk

WILLARD D. RUTH

In 1867 John F. Funk moved to Elkhart, Indiana, as Chicago at this time had no Mennonite Church and he thought it better to have his publication of Mennonite church papers closer to Mennonite communities. At Elkhart he rented a basement and carried on his work, but he saw that his basement was not suitable. A vacant lot was bought on a hillside. With his own hands this already busy man cleared this lot of brush and timber and had a four-story brick building built on this site. In a year this building was ready to be occupied and on New Year's Day of 1868 moving began. The move from his basement establishment to the new four-story modern printing establishment was quite an event. As a new printing press was bought and put in use the old hand lever type was discontinued.

At this time his publication was growing and reaching out into the entire church. Although at first people looked with suspicion on this new church literature, the brotherhood now started to look for the next edition to make its appearance.

Funk had left his brother Abram in Chicago engaged in the lumber business. At this time he influenced him to come to Elkhart and help in the publication of this church paper, which he did. They disposed of their entire holdings in the lumber business and devoted their entire time to the publication business. This business was established under the name of John F. Funk and Bro., and from 1868 to 1875 this business was conducted as such. As the business grew and became church-wide they decided to charter it. So in the year 1875 they obtained a fifty-

year charter under the name of Mennonite Publishing Co., which was continued for fifty years.

John F. Funk wrote many editorials in his church paper which showed his ability as a writer and student of Biblical doctrines and church needs and requirements. His outstanding book at this time was *The Mennonite Church and Her Accusers*. Those people who tried to set forth the faults of the Mennonite Church he tried to correct in this book.

The singing in the Mennonite Church at this time was practically all in German. Funk felt a need for a collection of English hymns; so a new songbook made its appearance in the Mennonite Church called the *Hymns and Tunes*. A number of brethren made a selection of these hymns but John F. Funk was the guiding hand back of it.

Another one of his books which was widely read in Bucks and Montgomery counties in Pennsylvania was the *Biographical Sketch of Pre. John Geil*, who was born in the year 1778 and died in

1866. He was a very forceful and fluent speaker. Geil and Funk were closely related. Preacher Geil's ancestors came from Virginia and were related to George Washington. Undoubtedly John F. Funk had listened to many of Geil's sermons.

The poem at the end of this book composed by Funk which shows his esteem of this man is as follows:

*I see him now the man of God
Commanding and serene;
So long a faithful servant been.*

*Within the plain old church of stone
That stood upon the hill
With windows low, and walls so strong
He meekly sought his place to fill.*

*For five and fifty years he stood
And lifted up his voice,
And told the people how that God
Had made the sons of men rejoice.
The faithful shepherd rests in peace
His flock still worships there
And oft methinks beside his tomb
One offers up a silent prayer.*

*And pleads with him who kindly hears
The humblest sinner's cry
That he may still assuage their fears
And send them blessings from on high*

*That he may lead and keep his church
In all the paths of love
May keep them as a shining light
And bring them to his rest above.*

*Oh! let us often think of him
Whose words were life and peace
And forward press to that abode
Where life and joy shall never cease.*

John F. Funk's great-great-grandfather had helped translate and publish the *Martyrs' Mirror* from Dutch to German. Funk saw a need that the church should have it in English. In the year 1836 the linguist J. F. Sohm translated it into the English language, which after three years of work was published by John F. Funk and Bro. at a cost of \$6,000. Whenever we see a bishop or minister use a confession of faith, do we think of who took the time and pains to compile it? If we look in the front of this book we will find John F. Funk's name. This book alone shows his wise forethought.

The *Family Almanac* was well received throughout the Mennonite Church, which John F. Funk also published, and was almost a necessity in many families. The Sunday-school helps which are now known as the quarterlies were a product of his mind. On his visits East he would distribute these helps, which offended many. Isaac Meyers of Deep Run Church would not let him preach there for this reason.

John F. Funk was ordained to the ministry in May, 1865, by John M. Brene-man, Gardner, Grundy County, Illinois. His first sermon was based on I Cor. 3:11. Fifty years later he used the same text

again. He used both the English and the German language. S. F. Coffman said, "My early impressions of the ministry were not so pleasant as I remember the sing-song grunting methods of the old ministers, but John F. Funk's preaching was different. He was a man of ability, unemotional, earnest, logical, and clear in his teaching of the Word of God and his manner and methods were interesting."

He established the church and Sunday school at Elkhart, Indiana, in 1871, going out into what he thought was the country, buying land, and thereon building the church which is now known as the Prairie Street Mennonite Church. This church was enlarged several times and it was seriously damaged by fire on February 15, 1931. When the cornerstone of the new church was laid, this was put on it,

"Founded by John F. Funk 1871."

Occasionally he would come east and preach and visit his relatives. In the morning he would hold services in the churches and in the evening he would preach in the schoolhouses which were packed to the doors. Such schoolhouses as Green Hill, North Branch, and Chestnut Ridge were in his home community and at these meetings he would hand out literature and advocate some of his progressive methods which were not well received in his old home district.

On June 6, 1892, he was ordained a bishop, to have the oversight of six churches surrounding Elkhart. At Elkhart was concentrated the best talent of the Mennonite Church, making it the outstanding church of the day. Many of the brightest and most talented young men and women of other localities were employed here. The influence of the Publishing House and Elkhart Church was felt throughout the entire church.

One of these men was John S. Coffman, the pioneer Mennonite evangelist, and his influence, work, and inspiration were felt by such men as M. S. Steiner, D. H. Bender, J. A. Ressler, and A. D. Wenger. The picture has been bright so far of John F. Funk but there is also a dark side of his life. He had his share of troubles which must be set forth to make the picture complete.

In his bishop district there was a difference and this difference was brought before the Indiana-Michigan Conference. Five bishops from other districts were also called in to consider the difference on January 31, 1902.

Their decision was that Funk should be inactive as a bishop but that his ministry should not be affected by their decision. He remained inactive as a bishop for the rest of his life. Influential and powerful in his thinking, men would turn to him easily and he could have headed a faction and split the church. The fact that he did not do so shows a good quality in the man. Years after some of the men who helped to hand in the decision

against him admitted that Funk was right. Funk's constant aim was to consolidate the church and not be an instigator of factions.

Troubles never come singlehanded and on November 18, 1903, the Indiana National Bank failed. This meant a personal loss to the Funks of \$40,000 which in those days was a fortune. Still another calamity was to befall them. March 26, 1906, fire broke out in the Publishing House and partially destroyed it. Regardless of this they never missed one issue of the church paper. These combinations of events resulted in a decision to dispose of the business to the young Publishing House in Scottsdale, Pennsylvania. The printing equipment and building were later sold to James A. Belco. The *Elkhart Truth* had this to say of John F. Funk on his eighty-ninth birthday, "Still active in business and occupying the same stand for the longest period of time as dean of Elkhart businessmen, each day finds him at his desk early and late." At ninety-three he was still occupying the same desk.

In 1925 some of his relatives from Pennsylvania visited him. He was at this time ninety years old but still alert. He was a very good conversationalist and had good eyesight and good hearing. After the evening meal he took them to his office, where in his library, which was the best, he had one of the original *Martyrs' Mirrors* of 1754. This edition is very rare and a copy can be found among his books. A rare collection of books showed his foresight. Before his guests realized it, the time was past midnight and this old man was poring over his prized possession, talking and entertaining them in such a way that it left a good impression upon them.

So let me sum up his achievements. In the year 1871 he helped locate twelve hundred Russian families who had come to the United States. Some of these families would come to the Funk home on their way west and he would put them up for days at a time. Someone said that he was a man of great patience. Only on one occasion did they see him out of sorts. Twenty Russian families came to Elkhart on their way west and Funk tried to find lodging for them in various homes but some were very reluctant to take these strangers in, which Funk did with no thought at all. He lost his patience with his brethren on this occasion. He would go with them and locate them in the best farming land in the west, which he picked out with good judgment, as these Russian families afterwards testified. These families never forgot John F. Funk's loyalty and devotion to their needs in time of trouble. This took time which this busy man gave, and he helped raise \$100,000 to get them started.

He helped to establish the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. The first series of meetings ever held in the

Mennonite Church he held at Masontown, Pennsylvania, and he had fifty converts.

He held the first evening meetings ever held in the Mennonite Church in Virginia and people came from miles around to attend.

In September, 1890, he was requested to come to Missouri to hold meetings. He wanted J. S. Coffman to go but as Coffman could not afford it at the time, John F. Funk financed him. One of the results of this meeting was that a young lawyer was converted named Daniel Kauffman, Kauffman.

Services were held at Elkhart, Indiana, for the first missionaries who were sent to India. John F. Funk presided at the meeting and the church was crowded to the doors. This was November 4, 1898.

His library and rare old books were acquired by Goshen College and the Mennonite Publishing House after his death. In 1867 he also helped to start a Sunday school in Ohio.

He saw the need for a church school. In 1895 Elkhart Institute was started and later developed into what is now known as Goshen College. In 1890 he started the Sunday-school helps, which are now known as the quarterlies.

As a minister and leader he was respected and loved by all as few men have been. In conference he was a forceful figure and his opinions were usually accepted. He was no extremist and he lived in a critical time, which was the change-over from German to English.

He proved cool, had good judgment, and many a harmful decision was prevented by his foresight. He died on January 8, 1930, at the age of ninety-five.

Chalfont, Pa.

A letter to J. F. Funk.

Amish P. O., Johnson Co., Iowa
April 23rd, 1874

Dear Brother Funk,

I hope you will not be offended at the zeal which I manifest in behalf of our brethren in faith across the ocean: I feel that I have offered as a *free gift* and *loan* all that I am able to bear with my limited means, which is included in the general Church contribution of Deer Creek, and which I suppose is in your hands ere this reaches you, but still I feel that more is needed. Sometimes I wish: Were I but a millionaire, so that I might be the instrument of doing much good and causing many hearts to rejoice—but nevertheless, Christ says the poor widow who cast two mites into the treasury of God cast in more than all the rest. So I hope that God's blessings may also rest upon a small sum that is given from a sincere heart. But forbear my indulgence. I did not mean to write an exhortation.

I simply wish to say, if you were able to give satisfactory information, so that

I might depend upon getting a hand to work on the farm to work out the money, I will yet borrow \$100.00 and forward it to you for the Russian aid upon those conditions. I have been speaking to several about this matter. All think the plan very good. So I will now act upon my own responsibility. Perhaps if I succeed, others may be induced to do the same. You stated in your last issue of the *Herold* that those who could take orphans should inform the "Board" of the fact. I have consulted with my wife upon that important responsibility, and we agreed

that we would be willing to take two—a girl and a boy, but not under ten years of age, as we have a family of small children. We also could provide a family with a house, at least for a while, until a better place could be provided. Hoping that my efforts may not all be vain, I remain Yours Respectfully,

Amish, Iowa J. D. Guengerich

From the John F. Funk Collection,
Archives of the Mennonite Church.
Slightly edited.

An Address by John F. Funk

Beloved friends:

Two weeks ago the 28th day of May was to me a special day, and on that account I was really sorry that we could not meet as first arranged. From another standpoint I was glad that the Lord in His wise providence had arranged the matter. I am feeling that the Lord's way is always the best, and we have the blessed assurance that what God doeth is always well done.

I was going in that day to tell you whatever the 28th day of May is to you, it is a very special day to me.

In 1862, in the month of October, at the time of the Indiana State Conference, I made my first visit to Elkhart and Elkhart County—my first visit to the Mennonite people of this locality and attended for the first time in my life the Mennonite Meeting at Yellow Creek. Remember this was in the fall of 1862.

It was a very remarkable meeting to me as well as to many others. I was then "that young fellow from Chicago." They didn't know my name so they distinguished me from all the other visitors here at that time but I did not know it until many years after.

I had intended to be present at that conference, but did not get here to Yellow Creek until the conference was over.

The conference was then held, if I remember right, on the second Friday in October. Saturday, the day following the conference, was the day for Baptismal Services and on this occasion 43 persons, mostly young men, were baptized. It was then yet in the early part of the Civil War and the young men were all subject to be drafted into the service. The government had passed a law that all "Conscientious Objectors" (as they were called in the late war), belonging to a church whose principles were opposed to warfare could pay a fine of \$300 in lieu of service and remain at home, and this was to some extent a reason that so many were baptized at that time and received into church membership. It was indeed a grand sight to see so many unite with the people of God and it gave me a very favorable and encouraging idea of the Mennonite Church in Indiana.

The day following was Sunday, and for the Yellow Creek Church Communion day. This drew together an immense crowd of people and over 600 brethren and sisters participated in the Communion and Feetwashing. I shall never forget that meeting and the few days we spent together here at this place and I rejoiced in my heart for these happy experiences of a living faith and religion.

Here I became acquainted with Bishop John M. Brenneman of Elida, Allen Co., Ohio. He was the Bishop that did most of the preaching and officiated in the baptismal services and the communion services.

I went back to my home in Chicago and attended to my work in the Lumber office during the week and my church and Sunday school services on Sunday. At that time I was a S. S. scholar in one Sunday school, a teacher in another, and superintendent in a third Sunday school. Besides attending to these three Sunday schools, I also attended each Sunday two church services, one in the forenoon and the other in the evening. Sunday in this way was for me a busy day, but was what I enjoyed.

One beautiful sun-shiny Sunday morning, the last Sunday in May 1863, I was told that there was someone at the door of my boarding house who asked to see me, and going to the door, I saw standing before me the old Mennonite Bishop John M. Brenneman. When I asked him to come into the house and make himself at home with us, he told me that he was in company with the aged minister, Peter Nissley, of Lancaster Co., Pa. They had been visiting some of the small Mennonite congregations in the west and among the congregations the one at Sterling, Ill., and after holding communion with them, they had started away on Saturday morning with the intention of getting to Elida, Ohio, to the home of Bro. Brenneman and Bro. Nissley was to be his guest over Sunday and would preach there. But when they came to Chicago, the Saturday trains had all left and there was no train to take them to Elida until late on Sunday afternoon. All they could do was to remain in Chicago over Sunday.

It was for them indeed a sad disappointment, but it has been a comfort to me and one of the happy events of my life that God had so ordered it as you will see in the events following.

I took pleasure in entertaining the brother, took him along to church service and brought him back with me for dinner. Brother Nissley had relatives or friends residing on Michigan Ave. with whom he had spent the night and after dinner he also came to see me. The two brethren were not pronounced friends of Sunday schools of which fact I was well aware and so I had to use prudence in taking them to a place which their church rules did not sanction. I told them this was a special day, the anniversary of the establishing of the school. I was the

superintendent and we had made special preparations for the service, and as the superintendent I had to be there and asked them kindly to go with me. Without any objection they at once consented to accompany me and I felt glad to have them. They never said a word to me against Sunday schools. They seemed rather pleased with the talk, the singing and the teaching, and a little later I had a letter from Bro. Nissley, which praised my work and bid me God's blessing on the work I was doing, which was a matter of great enjoyment to me.

(This address was copied, and slightly edited, from a notebook in the John F. Funk collection in the Mennonite Church Archives. The date and place of the address are not given.)

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Benevolent Organization of Mennonites

The B. O. of M. convened at 145 W. 18th St. Chicago, Illinois on the 26th of December 1894, with the President, Bro. M. S. Steiner, in the chair.

The session was opened with singing followed by earnest prayers in behalf of the work before the Board.

After prayer it was *Resolved*, That rules be suspended and that the following persons, not members of the Board, be permitted to take part in the sessions as members: Dr. H. A. Mumaw, Elkhart, Indiana, Bish. J. M. Shenk, Elida, Ohio. Pre. Peter Unsicker, Cullom, Illinois, Bro. Hamilton, Cullom, Illinois, Bro. G. I. Ben'ner, Elkhart, Indiana.

The President then gave a report and presented a number of suggestions, all of which were discussed separately. The Manager of the Mission, Bro. S. F. Coffman, and the Sec-Treas., Bro. E. J. Berkeley, gave satisfactory reports of the candition and progress of the work. Both brethren suggested the advisability of having a regularly ordained minister and his wife to take charge of the work. The following resolutions were then adopted:

1 *Resolved*, That the B. O. of M. accept the request of the Home Mission Advisory Committee and assume the responsibility of looking after the interests of the Home Mission in Chicago.

2 *Resolved*, That this organization request Bro. C. B. Brenneman and wife of Elida, Allen Co., Ohio to come to the Home Mission at Chicago, Ill. sometime in the present winter to acquaint themselves with the work and that Bro. Brenneman hold a series of meetings during his stay.

Session then adjourned for recess.

Afternoon Session

The reports given by the president manager, and treasurer showed that the different departments of the work, such as Kindergarten, Sewing School etc. were about self-supporting, excepting the medical dispensary; it was therefore

3 *Resolved*, That the physicians in charge of the Dispensary be authorized to charge a fee of 25 cents from such patients as are able to pay for medical treatment received.

The matter of sending a mission worker to Dickson Co., Tenn was next discussed. There being a number of members there without a minister, and under no conference, it was therefore

4 *Resolved*, That the traveling expenses of Bro. A. J. Yoder be paid to Dickson Co., Tenn. and that he engage in such work for the interest of the cause as may be deemed advisable.

In view of the increase of the work and the extra expense during the winter it was therefore

5 *Resolved*, That the monthly allowance for the Home Mission be \$150 for the winter months and \$125 for the summer months, and that the brethren, W. B. Page and D. R. Good, having charge of the Dispensary, receive their board free at the Home.

Inasmuch as the question of establishing an Orphan's Home has been brought before several of our conferences, and whereas Bro. S. K. Plank of Orrville, Ohio has tendered such assistance as to make such an establishment feasible, therefore be it

6 *Resolved*, That the offer of Bro. S. K. Plank of Wayne Co., Ohio, to lease his farm and home on which he resides to the Benevolent Organization of Mennonites to be used as an Orphan's Home, be accepted on the condition that the lease be extended to five years or longer and that the matter be referred to the Ohio Conferences for approval.

The matter of education was taken under consideration. The necessity of a good education for the advancement of the cause of Christ in every age, and especially in this age of education, the dangers awaiting the student at many of the schools and colleges of our land, the example set us by such men as Moses,

Joseph, Daniel, Paul, Jerome, John Deuck, Hubmaier, Menno Simons and others were pointed out and discussed; also the disadvantages under which our people labor in having to place our young people under other denominational influences to obtain an education, and the advantages they would enjoy by being in the society of our own people while attending school. It was therefore

7 *Resolved*, That we recommend the Elkhart Institute to any who desire to obtain a practical education. It was further

8 *Resolved*, That the report of this meeting of the B. O. of M. together with the Constitution and By-Laws of the same be printed in pamphlet form for distribution.

9 *Resolved*, That the names and addresses of all the members of the B. O. of M. be published with the Constitution.

It was further suggested that any person or persons interested in Mission work communicate with the President or Secretary or other member of the B. O. of M.

In consideration of their donations made to the B. O. of M., the brethren Peter Unsicker, C. H. Brunk and J. S. Augspurger were received as members for five years.

The election of officers resulted as follows:

Directors

For three years: J. S. Hartzler, A. R. Zook, A. B. Kolb

For two years: D. S. Yoder, J. K. Hartzler, G. L. Bender

For one year: M. S. Steiner, Chr. Herr Jr., D. Bergy

President: M. S. Steiner

Vice President: J. S. Hartzler

Secretary: A. B. Kolb

Treasurer: A. R. Zook

After the election of officers the meeting was adjourned.

Secretary Pro tem
A. B. Kolb

(The above minutes are deposited in the J. F. Funk Collection, Mennonite Church Archives, Goshen, Indiana.)

Amish in North Dakota

The article appearing under the above title in the January 1953 BULLETIN was mistakenly credited to Floyd E. Kauffman. The writer of the article in its present form is not known, although Eli J. Bontreger, Shipshewana, Ind., wrote the original upon which this article is based. The last paragraph of the article should have stated that Eli J. Bontreger served as bishop of the congregation from 1901 to 1910, when he moved to Wisconsin, and after that assisted the church by visiting them twice a year until 1936. Jacob Graber was ordained minister of the congregation in 1907 and bishop in 1913. Abraham (Abe) R. Gingerich was ordained minister in 1910, bishop in 1922, and died in 1930. For additional information on the Amish in North Dakota, see Melvin P. Hochstetler, "The Amish and Mennonites of Pierce and Rolette Counties of North Dakota," *Gospel Herald*, Aug. 1, 22, 1950.

—M. G.

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July, 1953

No. 3

George Jay Lapp, Disciple

CARL C. BECK

A Disciple Is Made

By all the odds of the then known medical experience, the tiny bundle who came to make his home with Samuel W. and Sarah Gross Lapp on May 26, 1879, should not have lived. He weighed exactly two and one-half pounds including the shawl in which he was wrapped. In the days before incubators and all the equipment of modern medical science, such tiny bits of humanity were not expected to survive more than a few days in a cold, unfriendly world. But God had other plans for George Jay Lapp. With the co-operation of a doctor-mother He brought him through to a robust babyhood and normal development.

Sarah Gross Lapp was not quite an ordinary woman. As a young mother she and her deacon-husband made the long trek from Pennsylvania to Nebraska in the days before one traveled by trans-continental air liners or pullman coaches. With their three sons, one daughter and a niece they settled in 1878 in the small and newly established Mennonite community near Juniata. Soon they were an energetic part of this colony, both taking an active interest in the affairs of the congregation. As a girl Sarah had taken an active interest in the care of the sick. It was her privilege to study a bit of medicine with a doctor in the East. This stood her in good stead when she arrived in the West. Doctors were not numerous. Much sickness could not be properly attended. A Doctor Ackley of Juniata soon learned of her natural ability with the sick. It was through his encouragement that she continued her study of medicine. Her keen interest in the ministry of healing and her willingness to sacrifice in order to be of help to the suffering made up in part for her lack of training. She possessed an extraordinary ability to diagnose the nature and stages of the better known illnesses. After she had continued her private studies a few years further, this same Doctor Ackley recommended her to the examiners. She passed the required tests and was granted a license to practice. In her subsequent practice she remained in close co-operation with the doctors of the area.



George Jay and Esther (Ebersole) Lapp dressed in the native costumes of India.

This was not the usual thing for women of that day. Medicine was not open to women in some sections. To combine a medical practice and home-making was a full schedule. No doubt there were well-meaning neighbors who questioned such a procedure. But God has His own way of accomplishing His will. In His good Providence He prepared a doctor-mother for a doctor-requiring child. Some of His ways are devious and marvelous to behold.

Some of the earliest memories that fastened themselves permanently on the young George's mind had to do with his mother in her role as community doctor. Lumber wagons, with straw or hay bedded thickly on the bottom, bore her noisily away over the frozen Nebraska ruts, while small faces pressed hard against windowpanes, eager to catch the last glimpse of their mother, wrapped warmly in buffalo robes, lumbering loudly across the prairie in answer to a call for help. The picture of a mother riding

away with erect carriage and chin held high in cheerful response to requests for deeds of mercy, must have made a deep impression on those childish minds.

Nor was it only form that left its impression. Spiritual service too was involved. Memories of their mother's return were quite as vivid as her leave-takings. Often after tenderly greeting her family she would fling herself down before the old couch, without so much as removing her outer garments, and in the awed presence of her children she would pour out a burdened heart in behalf of those to whom she had just ministered. She prayed not only for their physical healing. Often she was burdened for the spiritual welfare of her patients and prayed for their salvation. Such occasions cut even more deeply in impressionable minds than did the former.

Such service was not undertaken primarily in hope of gain. Says Bro. Lapp in his memoirs, "Mother generally had more accounts of credit in her books than she had cash in hand." Pioneer days were not easy. Drouths, poor prices for farm produce, high prices for shipped in "boughten" goods made for scarcity of money. This called for and received a great deal of free service. Mrs. Lapp was soon recognized as a good Samaritan in her community. Pecuniary considerations rated low when the calls for help came.

Samuel Lapp enjoyed the lot of his farmer neighbors. The fertile but drought susceptible soil yielded small monetary returns in spite of hard work and good management. Insect pests claimed their share of what was produced. In short, the family was not wealthy. Shoes and clothing were at a minimum in those pioneer days but even so it took some money to provide for a family of eight. Much food was home produced but there were always certain items that had to be purchased at the local store. And so the family enjoyed a poverty that was at times less than enjoyable. They knew what it was to be hungry and to lack that with which to satisfy hunger. On such occasions the situation was laid out before the Lord in prayer. He never allowed them to suffer from chronic malnutrition. Bro. Lapp expresses the opinion that a taste of unsatisfiable hunger was a good preparatory experience for work among a people who frequently know the pangs of physical hunger.

The young George and his brothers and sisters did not lack for direct spiritual training. Much of this was informally done. The laborious task of doing the weekly laundry over a corrugated washboard was often accompanied with a teaching process. On such occasions the children playing near by were taught the Lord's Prayer, Bible verses, and hymns. Little minds were early stored with precious Bible truths and the Scriptural principles of right conduct. Family worship was a rich experience. The parents were conscious of their inability to furnish the children a great many of the good things of life, and so they prayed often that they might bequeath to them a rich spiritual experience and heritage. They were anxious that the children early give themselves to their Saviour and make themselves available to Him for His use.

Even extremely hard work can be useful discipline if it is done in such a way as not to rob the mental and the physical capacities. Such work was not foreign to the young George's experience. Many a morning saw him following the team and plow to the field with a merry whistling, issuing out of the sheer exuberance and energy of his young heart. Night saw a limp figure trudging behind a tired team and crying from pure fatigue. Work was hard and without the benefit of modern machines. But the young man developed strong muscles and a physique that was to stand him in good stead in trying years to come. He learned how to do many useful tasks that were to prove useful later—the care of animals, horses in particular, the use of the home blacksmithy, how to shoe horses (all but one unwilling mule), and other tasks incidental to pioneer life either on the plains of Nebraska or on the plains of central India.

The physical and the spiritual development occurred but not at the expense of the mental. Educational facilities were a bit crude, but real education is not dependent on facilities. Eight years of grade school were followed by a three-year intermission in which the services of the strapping young man were needed on the farm. An accident and illness on the farm made it possible for the eager lad to attend the local high school some five miles distant. Again there was a three-year intermission in which he secured a position as a country school-teacher. The year 1901 saw him enrolled in the young Elkhart Institute. One year at Elkhart was followed by two years at Northwestern University Seminary and Medical School. Later it was possible for him to take a B.A. at Goshen, 1913, an M.R.F. at Bethany Theological Seminary in Chicago, 1930, and a B.D. at Goshen, 1947.

Working one's way through school has never been easy. Young Lapp discovered this. Night nursing, acting as a masseur under a doctor's supervision, tending furnaces, caring for and driving a carriage

horse, and other odd jobs were useful then as now. On this he comments with the same wistful note that working students have felt before and since his time. "Earning one's way has its value but also its handicaps. One is deprived of many of the social advantages and extracurricular activities of a school."

This period of formal training was also rich in other aspects. Contacts with students of the university, with people in the homes in the surrounding community, with those of the slum areas around the Home Mission, all were rich harvests of his stay in Chicago. Active service in small ways filled its place in preparation. Teaching a class of teen-agers in Sunday school, participating in young people's meetings, being superintendent of a little rural mission Sunday school, being a member of Volunteer Mission Fellowship, participating in Gospel teams, and helping in city mission work, all contributed to spiritual growth and enrichment.

The year 1904-05 was a rich year for Bro. Lapp both in training and service. He helped some at the Home Mission in Chicago. He was associated with Bro. and Sister Joseph B. Brunk, Siddle Miller, and Sadie Hartzler in opening the Kansas City Mission. During this period too he did considerable traveling in the interests of evangelism in our midwestern churches.

A Disciple Is Called

At the age of seventeen Bro. Lapp heard and responded to the call of his Master to make Him his own personal Saviour. The rest of his life was a series of callings and answerings. Perhaps that is the essence of discipleship—following so closely in the footsteps of the Master that one is ever within hearing distance of His whispered wish. But there are always calls that involve more in order to respond than others. It is this latter call that I am referring to especially here. Such a call came to Bro. Lapp through India. Bro. J. A. Ressler and Dr. and Mrs. Page were sent to India in 1899 to open mission work. The following year Bro. and Sister Jacob Burkhard joined them. A year later still George's brother Mahlon and his wife followed. Bro. Burkhard too was from this same Nebraska community. All of this came pretty close to George. Reports came back of the work and needs in India. The mind of this young student was much taken up with it. The future in America looked bright, but India would not be so easily shaken off.

It was during this time that he started "going steady" with a young student nurse in Chicago. One day they were out walking along the shores of Lake Michigan. Their thoughts were in a serious and pensive mood as young couples' thoughts are wont to become about this stage of the game. As they stood and looked in silence out over the broad and turbulent expanse of the lake, she

surprised him by asking suddenly, "Have you ever thought that the Lord might sometime call us to go beyond the sea to some far-flung mission field?" He had. Together they bowed their heads. Leaning over the low stone wall that lined the water's edge, they gave the Lord full control in their lives, should He lead to foreign shores or work at home. God had again been providentially at work behind the scenes in bringing these two souls together.

Not long after this Bro. Ressler returned from India and toured the churches. While in Chicago he made a personal appeal to George to give his life to the Lord in India. He volunteered.

George and his wife-to-be were accepted by the board. She, Esther Ebersole, who was now a graduate nurse, was quite as happy about going to India as was her fiancé. For her, it was the fulfilling of a lifelong dream. They were married June 25, 1905.

Everything was not clear sailing after they made their decision to go to India. Certain groups did not think that such promising young folks should leave the country. A delegation of elders registered an official appeal that they remain in the homeland in what they considered a much needed work in the home church. Tempting offers of positions loomed up before them. In their farewell tour folks bade farewell to them as though it were a funeral. Parents had looked forward to spending declining years with children about them. But the call had come. It had been answered affirmatively. They had no intention of going back on their promise.

A Disciple Is Used

The Lapps and the M. C. Lehman traveled to India together. Their Italian-owned ship, the *Rubatina*, steamed out of the New York harbor in October of 1905. As they passed the statue of liberty, these two young couples felt that they were leaving behind a great deal and were not too sure of what might lie out beyond that wide watery waste.

Ocean travel has its thrills for the novice. Through the kind permission of a relative of the ship's company they were permitted to explore the ship from one end to another. A trip up the swaying ladder to the crow's nest cost the two daring male members of the party a session with the marine life, while leaning over the ship's rail. A few days in bed allowed the gastronomic processes to right themselves.

A short stop at Naples allowed them to get a view of the city. Due to Bro. Lehman's illness they saw less of the city than they should have liked. A visit to an old cathedral gave them occasion to pause and moralize on all the superstition with which they were confronted there.

Back on board ship again Bro. Lehman's condition did not improve as they

had hoped. His condition was giving them all much concern. The ship's doctor finally issued orders that he should be landed at Port Said. It was quite an experience for two young couples to find themselves thus stranded without money or friends, one of their number seriously sick. An Englishman aboard ship heard of their predicament. He slipped into Bro. Lapp's hand twenty gold sovereigns, the equivalent of a little more than a hundred American dollars. This would take care of them for quite some time. In the hospital at Port Said M. C.'s illness was diagnosed as typhoid fever. After a month in the Port Said General Hospital, he seemed sufficiently recovered to justify the leave-taking of the Lapps. They went on to India. Soon after they left, he again took a turn for the worse. He was barely able to stand the trip as late as January of 1905, when they finally rejoined their friends in India. The Lapps had arrived there in December and were ready to begin a new chapter in their lives.

Life in India was strange to the Lapps. The first night in Bombay was a good introduction to what they might expect. After a meager supper they were put to bed. A sheet of corrugated metal constituted the spring; a thin comforter was the mattress. Very little sleep blest their efforts to rest that night. A 24-hour train ride brought them to Raipur. A ride on the Indian trains of 1905 was not exactly a restful experience. Bro. Lapp describes such a ride at some length in one of his articles. At Raipur they enjoyed the restful hospitality of other evangelical missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. Stoll. They and other missionaries of the city had helped Ressler and the Pages find their field at Dhamtari. Before the Lapps left, Stoll gave him a bit of advice that proved helpful to him. "You have come to India to stay. Remember the Indian Sadhu who first parks under a mango tree by the side of a stream or pool of water. The people come to him with their gifts and he finally constructs a roof over his head. Then he builds a temple and sets up a god and becomes a religious fixture in the community. Help make your mission a permanent Christian religious fixture." A 48-mile ride on a lumbering train brought them to Dhamtari. They were now at home.

Now came the task of getting acquainted with the people, their religions and their language. Their surroundings in the Mahlon Lapp home were quite congenial. Even so, discouragement was often not far off. Why had they come way out here to this forsaken spot on the earth's surface to bury themselves among an unappreciative folk? The encouragement of their fellow missionaries helped tide them over such times.

The Hindi language is not quite a sister language to English. In fact the Lapps had not spent much time with their pundit until George decided if he was

ever going to get a hold on the language at all, he would have to "unlearn" all the English he knew and start over from scratch in the Hindi. The first day's assignment was to memorize, learn how to write and how to pronounce all of the fourteen vowels and thirty-five consonants of the Hindi alphabet. Says Bro. Lapp, "We did—with groanings which couldn't be uttered." Reading simple sentences came easy, but to master the language required four years of this type of study. They started at once to read through the New Testament in Hindi. At first this meant very little to them. By the time they got through the four Gospels, they were understanding most of what they read.

Six months of such study brought them to a degree of proficiency where Bro. J. N. Kaufman thought Bro. Lapp could discuss the Sunday school lesson publicly. He carefully worked out ten questions and with the pundit's help translated them into intelligible Hindi. On Sunday morning he read and received answers to these questions one after another. To this day he has no way of knowing whether the questions were answered correctly or not. Ten months after having begun language study, he preached his first sermon—memorized and with the manuscript laid out before him.

Bro. Lapp likes to laugh at certain misunderstandings that occurred due to the inability of either the Indians to express themselves properly in English or the missionaries to express themselves in Hindi. On one occasion he was talking with some men about a drove of donkeys that had just passed. "I told them that in America the mules were large, long-eared — and used the wrong word. The words for men and animals are so near alike that . . . I called them long-eared men. The group was very respectable and didn't even smile until I went into my office. I then saw them through the window, bending over with laughter." On another occasion he meant to tell the orphanage girls, who were going out for a Sunday evening walk, to be sure to kill any jungle animal they might see. Instead he told them to kill any young man they might meet. Their pundit prided himself on his ability to use idiomatically correct English. But even he pronounced "betrothal" "betrothal," which is more nearly in keeping with the Hindi idea of marriages, Bro. Lapp observes wryly. ". . . until we could dream in Hindi . . . we really had not mastered it," he remarks in an article.

India's people had to be learned too. The Lapps read books on India's history, religion, and the psychology of her people. Evangelistic trips into the villages gave opportunity for firsthand study. Contacts in the orphanage and the Christian community provided the chance to study the habits of both Christian and non-Christian Indians. The caste system proved especially puzzling and interesting. On sev-

eral occasions he had reason to observe the elevated position into which becoming a Christian placed a person of even the very lowest class among his Hindu or Mohammedan neighbors. A Christian was usually considered to be without caste. Indeed, so they were taught to consider themselves.

First contact with the various degrading religions with which they were surrounded was for the Lapps a depressing experience. There was little in them that could lift their adherents to a higher plane of ethical or social living. It was quite clear to Bro. Lapp that nothing but the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ could bring to these benighted folk a soul's salvation and the ability to live above their religion-encouraged sin. The belief in the transmigration of souls seems to be the basic motivating factor in the whole religious system. The whole business failed to make a favorable impression on the Lapps and their fellow missionaries. It enhanced for them the necessity of pointing these misguided souls to something better.

Another area in which the Lapps early felt the need to help these folks was in their family living. The clan type of living did not make for strong home life. Grandmother was dictator. Wives were merely her chattel. No one had any responsibility but her. As a result children usually grew up wild. The missionaries wisely decided to inaugurate a more wholesome type of family living. The Christian community adopted a western type of family life. It has proved a great boon to them. The Lapps were influential in bringing this change about in their own group.

The Lapps had to get used to the new flora and fauna of India. Gardening had to be done on a different basis. Scorpions and snakes had to be constantly guarded against, especially in the wet season. In the hot season tigers, panthers, hyenas, and jackals moved into their area and made their raids on the village animals. In the wet seasons it was the wild hogs that came in to forage on the growing grain. The villagers appreciated the protection that the missionaries' rifles could be to them. Bro. Lapp often complied to their requests for help. Wild pork and venison often graced the Lapp table. They also received a great deal of satisfaction from the flowering trees, plants, shrubbery, and ferns which, when properly planted, produced a riot of rich colored bloom and foliage. The many varieties of roses they especially enjoyed. Add to this the brightly plumed birds that frequented these growths and you do have an esthetic picture which they could not help but enjoy.

Bro. Lapp early saw the need for more extensive training of the natives to prepare them to take the Gospel to their own people. In 1908 he was asked to work out a course of study which would provide for at least two years of Bible

study. By July of that year he had such a course worked out. Three students enrolled. One was blind, one half blind, and the third lame. The blind student was very intelligent and quite capable of undertaking the work. As much could hardly be said for the other two. The next year there were seven students. The five new students were capable of doing the required work. Lapp stayed with the work and saw it gradually grow. After his return from furlough in 1913 a new program was launched. The workers who were already out in the field also needed the benefit of such Bible training. The school year was cut down to six months. The other six months would be spent on tour in which the various stations would be visited and an intensive short program of study would be gone through with them. This way the workers could be reached with the training program without having the work suffer because of their absence. This proved very fruitful. The shortened period of study in the Bible school also encouraged more to attend. One can suppose that Bro. Lapp did a bit of student solicitation too as he went about on his tours. At any rate the Bible school continued to grow. Special inspiration conferences were carried on along with the other school program. A program of home study was also introduced. (Bro. Lapp's later job as director of correspondence for Goshen College was nothing new for him.) In this whole program, Bro. Lapp emphasized little study about the Bible and much study of the Bible itself.

Furloughs, especially first furloughs, are always welcome to the missionary. When the Lapps returned from their first term of service, they brought with them two fair-skinned little girls, Lois and Pauline, who had come to make their home with them. Grandparents, aunts and uncles would be anxious to see these new additions to the family circle. The return trip was to be via the Pacific Ocean. It would afford new sights and that much-coveted opportunity to "circumnavigate the globe." Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, Canton, Shanghai, and Honolulu, all furnished interesting stopping places and opportunities to observe firsthand the work of other missionary groups. Crossing the international date line called forth a typical Lapp prank. He decided to take a picture of it, and so he rounded up seventeen people of varied nationalities. (One can be sure he tapped every available source to get the seventeen nationalities). He lined them up, gave each a cluster of dates to display, and took a picture of the "International DATE LINE."

That first furlough was a rich and happy experience for the Lapps. Happily they did not know it was to be their last

as an unbroken family unit. Family reunions proved a rich treat for one of Bro. Lapp's social nature. There were opportunities for meetings in the churches, where others were inspired to take up their crosses. A year in college at Goshen led to the granting of the B.A. degree. Another farewell tour of the churches and they were off for a second term of service. The eighteen months at home provided a necessary rest from the rigors of work and climate.

The return trip was made enjoyable by stops in England, the continent, Palestine, and Egypt. The presence of their two little fellow travelers made it all the more enjoyable.

Scarcely had they returned from this first furlough, when their youngest daughter was taken from them by death. Four years later, less than a year after the birth of a third daughter, Mrs. Lapp too went home to be with her Lord. More will be given about these bereavements in a later section. During this term of service Bro. Lapp was again in charge of the work of the Bible School.

Following his second bereavement he returned to the states for an extended furlough. The years 1917 to 1919 were spent in evangelistic work in this country and in deputation work in behalf of the India Mission. In 1919 he was asked to take the presidency of the struggling Goshen College. He did this for a year. Much of the time of this year was taken up in soliciting money to pay off the huge deficit that had accumulated in the preceding years.

During this period of service the little family could not be kept together. The two daughters made their home first with Bro. Lapp's brother, Dan Lapp, and his family in Nebraska. Later they stayed with the Amos Ebersoles of Goshen. They could see more of their father here. Still later they were with the John Nyses of Souderton, Pa. Though the two children were kindly received in each of these homes, these were not happy days for the Lapp family. A father's heart must have longed to give them the kind of home that is every child's birthright.

But happier days were yet in store for Bro. Lapp and his little ones. In 1919 Fanny H. Hershey, a young missionary to India, returned for her first furlough. Suffice it to say that when she returned to her field in 1921, she took with her as a husband the subject of this paper. Wedding bells rang for them on April 14, 1920. God has blessed this union with a long and congenial companionship. Sister Lapp took her two motherless stepchildren to her heart as though they were her own. No mother ever cared more lovingly and unselfishly for daughters than did she. Bro. Lapp recalls with a twinkle in his eye an incident which occurred shortly after their wedding. Harriet and Lois

were 6 and 12 respectively at the time. One day soon after their home was re-established, Mrs. Lapp noticed that Harriet was following her about with a troubled expression on her face. Finally she said, "Mother"? "Yes," followed by a pause. "Mother, do you know that when you married Daddy, you married me too?" Indeed she had. One can only wish that all stepparents could fill their sacred offices as mother or father as did Sister Lapp. A happy home was again brought into existence.

With such a loyal helpmeet again at his side, George Lapp was again able to resume his duties in India. They returned to the field in 1921. He again took up the work of the Bible School. He directed its work continuously from its inauguration in 1908 until 1929 when it was merged with the Academy to form the Christian Academy and Bible School. For some years this new institution was the largest school in the Mennonite Church, having an enrollment of 300 to 350 students.

The furlough of 1929-30 gave Bro. Lapp the much desired opportunity of continuing his schoolwork. He attended the Bethany Theological Seminary in Chicago and was granted an M.R.E. degree.

His fourth term of service, 1930 to 1938, found the Lapps in charge of the Shantipur Leper Home. This provided ample opportunity for service. His rearing by a doctor-mother and his bit of medical schooling were again of service here.

Again two years of furlough (in which the writer first made the acquaintance of the Lapps) and the year 1940 saw them returning to India for what was to be their last term of service there. Bro. Lapp undertook a strenuous program of evangelistic work. But his generally robust physique had its one weak spot. In June, 1942, he was "bowled over," as he puts it, by a paralyzing stroke. His condition was critical, but the Master was not yet finished with His disciple. Slowly the fog lifted from a disoriented mind. I have heard Bro. Lapp rejoice in the fact that when light began to flood back into his consciousness it was in the form of memorized Scriptures—whole passages of it, a chapter or more in length. With many another disciple he can testify that hiding God's Word in the heart pays off in large dividends.

After Bro. Lapp was sufficiently recovered, it was decided by all concerned that it was time for him to return to the homeland. He continued the management of the Balodgahan colony until 1945 when he was prevailed upon to end a long and useful ministry of nearly 40 years in India. He turned over his bishop duties into the capable hands of J. N. Kaufman and turned his face homeward for the last time. (Written in 1949).

Christian Workers' Conference

JOHN UMBLE

Christian Workers' Conference is the name applied to the (old) Mennonite district conference formerly known as the Sunday School Conference and in Ohio for a number of years as the Sunday School and Young People's Meeting Conference. In both the Ohio and the Indiana-Michigan conference districts the "Sunday School Conference" became the Christian Workers' Conference in 1943.

Before 1921 a number of Mennonite congregations in Central Kansas held an annual Christian Workers' Conference over the Easter week end. In 1921 this conference was held at Larned, Kans., with good attendance and interest. In 1922 the Missouri-Kansas Conference, where lay delegates had equal voice in conference with ministers, voted to encourage Christian Workers' conferences under certain conditions. In that year at the same place a Sunday School Conference, a Young People's Conference, and a Missions Conference, each with separate sessions followed successively at the close of the Church Conference. In 1923 "Christian Workers' Conference" was used as a covering name and organization for these three conferences, but each retained its separate name and sessions. In subsequent years these subsidiary conferences were held, sometimes before the church conference, under the general title "Christian Workers' Conference" or sometimes merely "Workers' Conference" but the various interests retained their special designation. In more recent years other special interests were included under the Christian Workers Conference—Teachers' Conference (1941), Sewing Circle Conference (1951), The Christian Home Conference (1941), Christian Life Conference (1942), and also a Civilian Public Service Program (1942), Marriage and Home Conference (1943), and Christian Education Conference (1943).

Since the organization of the Commission for Christian Education and Young People's Work, the Southwestern Pa. Conference elects a "Christian Education Cabinet" to plan the activities formerly included under the Christian Workers' Conference. In most districts this conference has replaced the Sunday School Conference.

The term "Christian Worker" was used much earlier, however, in the title, *The Christian Worker's Manual*, the general title of a projected series of three booklets "The Ministry," "The Sunday School," and "Missions." The publication was authorized by General Conference in 1911 and "The Sunday School" was published in 1913. *The Christian Worker* also is the title of a book by Daniel Kauffman published in 1922 under the auspices of the Mennonite Board of Missions

and Charities. A "Workers' Meeting," a combination of Sunday school meeting, harvest meeting and evangelism was held in the Ephrata Mennonite Church over the Labor Day week end Sept. 3, 4, 5, 1927.

Until within recent years the Central Illinois Conference has made the most extensive use of the term "Christian Workers." In the December 1910 issue of *The Christian Evangel*, the editor begins a new feature, "Christian Workers' Section." This is continued and amplified in succeeding issues to include personal work, C. E. topics and the Sunday school lessons. In 1912 the editor of the *Evangel*, A. B. Rutt, was one of the speakers at the first annual "Soul-Winning Conference for Christian Workers," an interdenominational venture held at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church in St. Louis, Mo. He also gave an address in the closing session of the second conference held at the same place in January 1913. Beginning in January 1917, the Central Illinois Conference of Mennonites annually held a Christian Workers' Conference. This was in addition to and separate from the annual church conference held in August each year. In January 1919, this conference devoted one day each to missions, Sunday school and young people, education, pastoral work and denominational interests. The conferences consisted chiefly of inspirational addresses. By 1925 when the young people requested course instruction in various subjects the Christian Workers' Conference was replaced by the Christian Workers' Institute. In 1926 a committee was appointed to outline courses.

Goshen, Indiana

(From *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*)

The Office of Chorister in Mennonite History

H. S. BENDER and J. G. REMPEL

The song leader for the hymns sung in the worship of the Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations in all countries before the introduction of the reed or pipe organ was known as the chorister or *Vorsänger*. The origin of the office is lost in antiquity.

In the Swiss congregations and their descendant groups, the office was in essence a voluntary one, but once assumed, was retained for life. Usually there were several in a congregation, who took turns. In early days in Eastern Pennsylvania and daughter settlements, it became customary for the choristers, usually three to seven in number, to sit around a table in the front of the meetinghouse, a custom which has died out only in the last generation in the most conservative congregations. Later the choristers sat in the front benches. Not until the 1920's did choristers in the (old) Mennonite congregations generally arise and face the

congregation while leading, or use gestures to mark the time. After this transition the chorister, almost never the minister, selected and announced the hymns, although in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference, for instance, it is still customary for the minister to announce the hymn sung before the sermon. In the earlier days the chorister sometimes "lined" the hymns, i.e., he read each line of the hymn before the congregation sang it. This custom, not uniquely Mennonite, probably arose because of the lack of hymnbooks. In more recent times the (old) Mennonite congregations elect their choristers, sometimes at the annual business meeting for a one-year term. In earlier times the tuning fork was used to get the right pitch, now the pitch pipe. The Conservative Amish Mennonites, and the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, as well as the (old) Mennonites and other conservative groups do not use musical instruments in their worship but have congregational singing led by the choristers, in contrast to other Mennonite groups who have accepted the organ or piano or both, even though some continued the use of choristers along with the instrument.

The Old Order Amish Mennonites have no officially appointed choristers. Any brother of the church who has the ability and the informal training necessary to lead in the singing of the difficult tunes, handed down orally from generation to generation, may at the proper time in the services announce the number of a hymn and lead it. He does not rise nor does he sit in a special place as he leads the hymn. He always begins each line alone, the congregation not falling in until the second syllable. In Holland most if not all congregations formerly must have had a chorister, known as the *voorsinger* or *voorzanger*. Small congregations had one chorister, larger congregations two or more. Among the Groninger Old Flemish and the Old Frisians the chorister used to choose the hymns which were to be sung; in the other congregations he led the singing of the hymns, which were announced by the preacher. In some congregations the Psalms were sung regularly, beginning with Psalm 1 and finishing with Psalm 150, and then beginning again with Psalm 1. In 1620 the chorister of the Flemish congregations at Leiden was instructed that he should omit the *Wraeck Psalmen* (Psalm of vengeance). After the introduction of organs (about 1775) the chorister became superfluous, strictly speaking, but still held his office, and in a few congregations the chorister stood before the pulpit leading the singing until the beginning of this century. The chorister, who usually was chosen for lifetime, customarily received a small salary, especially in city churches; in some cases he also read the opening Scripture.

The institution of choristers was taken along when the Mennonites moved from Holland to Prussia and from Prussia to

Russia, 1789-1820. Since the choristers were chosen by secret ballot, just as were the ministers and the deacons, this position was held in high esteem. For this reason it was desired by many church members. In church, as well as at festivities in the homes, the choristers occupied a place of honor. They entered the church before the ministers. As a rule there were several choristers in one congregation, at times even four or five. The first chorister would call out the first line and the number of the first song. He would also start the song, whereupon the other choristers and then the whole congregation would join in. During the second song the ministers entered.

This custom was adhered to in most churches of Russia for more than a century. It was not until the last few decades before World War I that the first musical instruments were introduced into the churches. Although the choristers remained in their position, their service decreased in importance. Where well-trained choristers, usually using tuning forks, led the singing, the song was started on the right pitch, otherwise the pitch was not always satisfactory. On the whole, however, it was remarkable how the choristers, who received no special musical training, still made good progress in this art of leading the singing, mainly through devoted practice.

When the Mennonites, in the seventies of the last century, migrated from Russia to the United States and Canada, they transplanted into their new homeland the practice of appointing choristers. Since the Mennonites who settled in the United States from Russia as a whole were more progressive than those settling in Canada, the musical instrument and the choir largely replaced the chorister in their churches. This trend beginning in the late 19th century was completed by the end of the first quarter of the 20th century.

In Canada, on the other hand, the use of choristers prevailed much longer. This was especially true of the group which is usually called the Old Colony Mennonites. Here the choristers still hold their position of importance, and choirs and instruments are unknown. The Mennonites who came to Canada from Russia in the 1920's continued the practice of choristers insofar as they organized independent churches, but here also the musical instrument is gradually displacing the chorister. In South America, where the Mennonite immigrants from Russia in 1930 and after lived in closed settlements, and in Mexico, the practice of having choristers has also continued.

The congregations of original Swiss-South German background in the General Conference Mennonite Church, no matter how remote the background, retained the chorister much longer than those of Prussian and Russian background. In the congregations of Swiss-Alsatian-Amish background, such as

Eden (Moundridge, Kans.) choristers were elected, usually three. The office was quite an honor and there was some friendly rivalry. They also served as choir directors. In the congregational singing, the choristers took turns in leading the hymns. They sat in front, announced the hymns, lined them, and led out, and were always a little ahead of the congregation. In the Eastern District Conference choristers still hold an important and honored position in most of the congregations, although a few churches now depend on the choir and the instrument to lead the singing.

The Hutterian Brethren, like the Old Order Amish, have no officially appointed choristers. The minister chooses the hymn, announces it, and then reads the first line. Any brother of the church who has the ability and informal training necessary to lead in the singing of the tunes handed down orally may then lead the hymn. After the first line is read and sung, the minister reads the second line, which is then sung. This routine is followed to the end of the hymn. The chorister does not stand or sit in a special place and no musical instruments are ever used. These practices have been followed without change for many generations.

(From *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*)

Crawford County No. 3

MAURICE A. MOOK

The following sketch concerns what is probably one of the shortest-lived Old Order Amish communities ever to have existed in the United States. Its once popular name among the Amish is a misnomer, for although it was known among neighboring Amish communities as "Crawford County No. 3," it was not located in Crawford County, Pa., but in northwestern Warren County. Warren County is in northwestern Pennsylvania, and is bounded on the north by New York state and on the west by Erie and Crawford Counties; the latter two counties are bounded on the west by the State of Ohio.

"Crawford County No. 3" was also known as the "Bear Lake" Amish Church, Bear Lake being a small village in northwestern Warren County just south of the New York state line. The Amish families lived within a few miles of Bear Lake, most of them west and southwest of the village. The post office address of two of the families was Columbus, Pa., a small town in Warren County southwest of Bear Lake. One family lived northwest of Bear Lake, in New York state, just north of the state line. Another family lived one-half mile east of Bear Lake. Despite the popular name of the colony, none of the families lived in Crawford County. They were several miles east of the county line, which was ignored in the Amish eponym.

"Crawford County No. 1" was the Atlantic, Pa., Old Order Amish church, which began in 1924 by the settlement of Amish families from Geauga County, Ohio. This community has been a small and rather stable Old Order Amish congregation for nearly thirty years; it had a church population of thirty families in September, 1952. "Crawford County No. 2" was an Amish community at Spartansburg (also known as "Sparta"), in north-eastern Crawford County; it was begun in the early 1930's and was abandoned in the late 1930's. It had from thirty to forty families when it was largest in 1935, but it finally expired as a victim of the depression. Spartansburg is about twenty miles southwest of Bear Lake, and Atlantic, in southwestern Crawford County, is about 48 miles southwest of Sparta.

The present sketch is principally based upon the oral testimony of four Old Order Amish informants: Bishop Danny J. F. Miller and his wife Mary (Troyer) Miller, and their daughter-in-law Mrs. David D. J. Miller (nee Lizzie Miller), all being residents of the Mercer County (Jackson Center, Pa.) Old Order Amish community in 1952; and Chris Troyer, a resident of Stark County, Ohio (Eastern District church), in 1952. The Millers were interviewed in Mercer County in June, 1952, and Chris Troyer was interviewed at his home near Hartsville, in Stark County, Ohio, in September, 1951. Danny, Mary, and Lizzie Miller lived at Bear Lake for ten months, from January to November, in 1934; Chris Troyer never lived at Bear Lake but was a member of the Sparta community from November, 1934, until March, 1938, and has known the Amish members of the Bear Lake settlement all his life. All of these informants at the time of interviewing demonstrated good memories, a culturally patterned characteristic of most Amish people. The writer first heard the expression "Crawford County No. 3" used by Preacher Ben Raber (deceased December, 1950), Andy G. Byler, and Manuel Fisher at Atlantic, Pa., in September, 1950, and the latter informant supplied the names and present locations of several Bear Lake residents.

The movement to Bear Lake began at Sparta, Pa., and in Stark County, Ohio, in the fall of 1933. At this time Jerry Troyer of Sparta bought a farm at Bear Lake from Mr. John Day of Youngsville, Warren County, Pa. Jerry Troyer told his brother-in-law, Danny Fisher in Stark County, of his purchase, and Mr. Day, accompanied by Jerry Troyer, traveled to Stark County to elicit the interest of Danny and his wife in a farm at Bear Lake. Danny and Mary went to Bear Lake to examine farms and decided to buy one. The trough of the depression came in 1933 when farms could be secured in this area for a nominal down payment. Danny agreed to pay \$1900.00 for 180 acres and made a down payment of less than \$50.00. Jerry Troyer had also se-

cured his farm of over a hundred acres for a nominal down payment. Both "bought" these farms from Mr. Day, who owned several in the area and was anxious to sell. The other Amish families rented farms at Bear Lake, and the movement to the new colony began.

The first to settle at Bear Lake were Jerry and Annie (Miller) Troyer, who with their son David, eighteen years old at the time, moved to Bear Lake from neighboring Sparta in the fall of 1933. Jerry was born in 1874 and was 59 years old at the time of the Bear Lake settlement. His family was the first to move to Bear Lake, and also the first to leave, in October, 1934. They lived there only about a year, but were the family that lived the longest in this short-lived settlement. Instead of returning to Sparta in October, 1934, the Troysers moved to Geauga County, Ohio, from whence they had come to Sparta in the first place.

The next family to arrive at Bear Lake was that of Danny and Mary Miller and their children. Danny was born in 1878 and was 56 years old when at Bear Lake. He was ordained an Amish preacher in 1909 in Stark County, and advanced to bishop in 1918, also in Stark County. He was the only Old Order Amish minister ever to reside at Bear Lake. They had with them three unmarried children at the time: Gertrude, 23 years old and a member of the church; Elizabeth, 16 years old; and Joe, 15 years old. Gertrude was the only unmarried church member at Bear Lake. She and her mother were anxious to move to Bear Lake, but soon tired of it and were equally anxious to return to Stark County within a few months. The Millers moved to Bear Lake the first week of January in 1934; they returned to Stark County November 8 of the same year.

Danny and Mary Miller's son, David, D. J. Miller and his wife Lizzie and their four young children also moved to Bear Lake from Stark County with the Danny Millers in early January, 1934. They left Bear Lake to return to Stark County a few days earlier than Danny and Mary in November, 1934. Lizzie Miller told me that David and she had decided to return to Stark County a couple of months before they did and that they had decided they would return whether or not his parents did. David was a little hesitant to leave at first, as was also Danny, but the wives kept insisting and the husbands finally consented. These women were lonesome and homesick for Ohio, they said, because there were "not enough Amish people" at Bear Lake. Mary Miller said that she cried and couldn't sleep or eat, she was so homesick. She said that she was afraid of dying at Bear Lake, although when I interviewed her at Mercer in 1952, eighteen years later, she was hale and hearty and apparently happy in the "grossdaddy" part of the home that the David Millers have provided for them. The dissatisfaction of the Amish women at Bear Lake

was a distinct factor in the decision to abandon the attempt to form a permanent Amish settlement here. The women also complained of the cold weather. Lizzie Miller said that her garden "truck" froze in June and again in August the same year, and Mary Miller said that there were nights in January and February, 1934, when she and her daughter Gerty had to fire the stove all night in order to keep warm. This seems like exceptionally inclement weather for this part of Pennsylvania; it may be colder in retrospect than it was at the time.

The largest family at Bear Lake was that of David and Lizzie Miller, for they moved to Bear Lake with four small children and their fifth child was born there. Fannie Miller was born March 22, 1934, less than three months after her parents had moved to Bear Lake. She was the only Amish child born at Bear Lake. Other children of this family were John, who was five years old when his family moved to Bear Lake; Daniel, three years old; Noah, two years old; and Mary, who had her first birthday at Bear Lake in March, 1934. This family lived on the same farm and in the same house as Danny and Mary Miller, though, as is usual with Amish people, in their separate part of the house.

Jerry Troyer's family was the only Amish family at Bear Lake through the winter of 1933-34. They were joined in early January by the families of Danny and David Miller. Two more families joined them in the spring of 1934. Joni E. Miller and his wife Nancy Troyer, a sister of Mrs. Danny Miller, moved from Stark County to Bear Lake in the spring of 1934, about April 1. They brought two sons with them: Mose, 16 years old; and William who had his 13th birthday in May, 1934. This family rented a farm from a Mrs. Hunter, and they lived just across the New York state line, towards Clymer, N.Y., about two miles west of Bear Lake. They stayed at Bear Lake only through the summer of 1934, returning in September to Stark County from which they had come less than six months before.

The fifth Amish family at Bear Lake was that of Edward J. Smucker and his wife Marvann Troyer. She was a daughter of Jerry and Annie Troyer and a niece of Mrs. Danny Miller and also of Mrs. Joni Miller, for Mrs. Danny Miller, Mrs. Joni Miller and Jerry Troyer were brother and sisters. The Smuckers moved from Geauga County, Ohio, to Bear Lake in the spring of 1934, and they were the last family to leave, returning to Geauga in the spring of 1935. They had two daughters with them in Bear Lake, Ada, fifteen years old, and Anna, ten years old at the time. They rented a farm a half-mile east of Bear Lake, and Ed did carpentering in and around the village. Theirs was the only family that lived east of the village, though none of them lived more than five miles distant from each other.

Another Amishman, David Chupp, moved from Sparta to Bear Lake in the spring of 1934. He was a married man, but his wife and children were in Ohio, not having accompanied him to Sparta or to Bear Lake. He attended Bishop Danny's worship services regularly at Bear Lake and is described as "full of fun" at the time. He stayed in the area after the other families left, and is reported to have turned "English" and to have later married English. His present residence was not ascertained, but he is said to now reside in western Pennsylvania in the vicinity of Greenville, Mercer County. He lived four or five miles southwest of Bear Lake on a small farm he rented about a mile east of Columbus.

The families in the order above enumerated consisted of three, five, seven, four, and four persons, and there was also David Chupp who farmed without the aid of women or children. There were thus twenty-four persons at Bear Lake when they were all there together through the summer of 1934. The first family arrived in the fall of 1933 and the last left in the spring of 1935. However, the community functioned as a church congregation only during the residence of Bishop Danny Miller from January to November, 1934. Of the twenty-four members of the Amish community, twelve were members of the church: the husbands and wives of the five families, Gertrude Miller, and David Chupp. Danny Miller, the only resident minister, held services regularly, and would preach both sermons of the worship service. Bishop Eli Hostetter and Deacon Manuel Hershberger of Sparta visited at Bear Lake once, but neither participated in a worship service there. Bishop Danny visited at Sparta twice, but was never invited to preach. There was no fellowship between the Bear Lake and Sparta churches, although they were only twenty miles distant from each other. Bishop Danny's father, Deacon Joseph S. Miller, from Stark County, visited once in the summer of 1934 and assisted in the worship service. Several Sparta families, especially those of Andy Mast, Eli Mast, and Albert Miller, came to church several times at Bear Lake. The Bear Lake church was never listed in Raber's *Calendar* or the Mennonite *Yearbook and Directory* as an organized congregation.

In early October, 1934, four men from the West District Old Order Amish church in Stark County, Ohio, came to Bear Lake to ask Bishop Danny to return to their church as their Bishop. Danny had had bronchitis and whooping cough at Bear Lake and finally, and apparently somewhat reluctantly, decided that the local climate was too cold and too rough for Amish people. As has been mentioned, Mrs. Danny had decided soon after she arrived in Bear Lake that the winters were too severe. Jerry Troyer's family left Bear Lake the month the Ohio emissaries arrived, and the David Millers had decided several months earlier that they

were not going to stay. Joni Millers had left the month before, after his wife had threatened that she'd "go back to Stark County if she had to walk all the way." Mrs. Danny was dissatisfied with "too few Amish people and no relatives" at Bear Lake. She must have meant "too few relatives," for Jerry Troyer was her brother, Mrs. Joni Miller was her sister, and she had a daughter and five grandchildren with her, besides her own three children. Moreover, Mrs. Ed Smucker was her niece. In fact, all of the Amish at Bear Lake, excepting David Chupp, were close relatives of each other. Kinship, here as elsewhere among Amish people, was a distinct factor in leading to the beginning of the Bear Lake colony in the first place.

Added to the personal and psychological factors of lonesomeness, homesickness, and ill health, economic conditions must be added as circumstances leading to the decision to give up the Bear Lake experiment. All farmers were in straitened circumstances in this area during the depression years. Farmers found it difficult to sell their products, and neither of the families who "bought" their farms ever made more than their initial nominal down payments. The renters found it difficult to pay the rent, and all had difficulty in marketing their produce and crops. Bear Lake as a small village with but one general store, one feed mill, a post office, and a church, offered little opportunity as a market. Danny Miller relates how they would drive to Corry, eleven miles from Bear Lake, once a week to sell their cream. They also sold a few onions to a buyer who shipped them to Buffalo, New York. The Spartansburg Amish community was also a victim of the depression and was abandoned a few years later. An English farmer-informant at Sparta epitomized the economic situation in the general area as follows: "All of us farmers had it rough in those days. Many didn't make a go of it around here. The Amish worked hard, but just couldn't get enough to do anything with."

"Crawford County No. 3" as a community of 24 persons, only 12 of whom were adult, and which as a group of worshipping families had a duration of less than a year, must be one of the smallest and most temporary Amish congregation-communities ever to have existed in the New World history of "Die Stillen im Lande."

State College, Pennsylvania

Book Reviews

The Landis Family Book. Section I, by Ira D. Landis. Published by the author, now Bareville, Pennsylvania, 1950. 229 pp., paper bound. \$3.00.

In this book the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, genealogist of the Landis family lists certain descendants of Jacob Landis who settled in Lancaster County around 1717. Those covered in this book, Section I, are the descendants of Henry Landis, one of the four grandsons of Jacob Landis. At least three more volumes, one for each of the remaining three grandsons, are contemplated by the author. Although the author admits that the tables are not complete he does list several thousand descendants, giving the usual genealogical information for each person for whom it could be obtained. Most of the book is composed of the lists of descendants, except for approximately thirty pages of preface, family history, and index.

MELVIN GINGERICH

Seed from the Ukraine. By Katherine Nickel. New York: Pageant Press, 1952. Pp. 113. \$3.00.

The author of *Seed from the Ukraine* is the schoolteacher daughter of Kansas pioneer Mennonite parents who moved to that state from Russia in the 1870's. Relying upon old records and the stories told her by her parents and grandparents, she tells the story of the coming of the Russian Mennonites to America. The account begins in Russia in the 1860's and takes the reader to the pioneer settlement in Kansas, established by the Mennonites near the end of the next decade.

The author's purpose was to acquaint the reader with the unique culture of the Russian Mennonites. She has been successful in part in this purpose, although one feels that she has not properly caught and interpreted the religious motivations of her ancestors.

Although one would gather from the title that hard winter wheat is the unifying thread of the story, this is not the case, for wheat plays only a minor part in the book. This is not a novel as that term is ordinarily defined for it does not have a plot. Rather it is a narrative, embellished by conversation.

Those who are not acquainted with the German language will be disturbed by the large number of untranslated foreign phrases appearing in the book. Those who

know the German will be disturbed by the words misspelled in that language, and the historians will be annoyed by the comparatively large number of historical inaccuracies in the volume. For example, the statement is made that there were one million Mennonites in Russia when the number was perhaps never more than a fraction of that figure. The English teacher too will find fault with the misuse of words and the literary style of the work. The book does, however, hold the reader's interest and presents several aspects of Russian Mennonite culture not found in the more commonly known references.

MELVIN GINGERICH

History of One Branch of the Krehbiel Family, by W. J. Krehbiel. Published by the author, McPherson, Kansas, 1950. 100 pp., paper bound. \$2.00.

Jost Krehbiel was born before 1670, migrated from Switzerland to Germany and in 1709 bought the Primmerhof in the Palatinate. A fifth generation descendant of Jost was John Carl Krehbiel, who came to America in 1833 and six years later brought his family to the frontier in Lee County, Iowa. There he became a Mennonite minister and served the church faithfully for many years. Among his children was John Jacob who moved to Harvey County, Kansas, in 1879. John Jacob's son William John is the author of this book.

Included in the book is a description of the source materials, including seventy-four old letters, used for this history, a seven-page account of the Krehbiel family and an eleven-page article on Mennonite life in the Palatinate by John Carl Krehbiel, a twenty-page biography of John Carl Krehbiel, and a twenty-eight-page account of John Carl's son J. J. and his family. A listing of ten generations of the Krehbiel family and short accounts of related families of the Leisy and Ruth lineage contribute additional genealogical information.

To the church historian very likely the most valuable sections of the book are the two chapters dealing with life in the Palatinate and the biography of John Carl Krehbiel, perhaps the first Mennonite preacher to be ordained west of the Mississippi. Readers who enjoy accounts of pioneer life will appreciate the well told stories of this volume.

MELVIN GINGERICH

MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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Preacher on Foot—Christian Reeser

ETHEL REESER COSCO

In 1867, ten years after he came to Illinois, Christian Reeser was ordained to be a preacher. With a farm in need of improvement and a growing family to provide for, it was a serious matter to accept such a responsibility, especially in a day when most of the ministers received no salary. However, he took that call of the church so seriously that from the beginning he made it the chief business of his life.

Although his active years of ministry carried him to points outside the local area, his main place of service was in the Roanoke congregation. This was one of two congregations which had grown out of what was originally called the "Mackinaw Meeting," a group of Amish who had settled along the Mackinaw River. At first the few families met for worship in each other's homes in the same manner as the Amish do today. That practice became inconvenient with the continual influx of new settlers and the increase in the size of families already there. In 1872 those who lived toward the south purchased a building formerly used by the Rock Creek congregation; in 1875 a new building was erected by those who lived farther north. This became known as the Roanoke church.

That is the reason why Christian Reeser was ordained in a private house and why his first seven or eight years of preaching was done in homes. His ordination was decided upon by a vote of the congregation and took place at the same time as that of a co-minister, Joseph Wagner. Jacob Zehr, the co-operating bishop of the two congregations, officiated at this service. Harry Weber, in his history concerning the Mennonites of Illinois, says the ordination occurred at the Christian Schrock place, a short distance east of where the church now stands. However, the living members of the family say that the service took place in the Christian Zehr residence, a brick dwelling house on the Mackinaw River, where he also preached his first sermon.

There were a number of reasons why the members of the "Mackinaw Meeting" felt led to cast their vote for him as a minister. Most important, his life showed the fruits of a genuine spiritual conversion. No one seems to remember hearing



Christian Reeser, 1819-1923. Ordained a minister in the Amish Mennonite Church in 1867, he gave his last address in his church in his 100th year. For many years he served the Roanoke, Illinois, Mennonite Church.

him say at what age or place he experienced a personal salvation, but he used to speak of the joy he felt, realizing victory over habits which before he had been unable to conquer by his own will power.

His keen interest and delight in conversing with people fitted him for his mission, as well as his unassuming and humble manner. He also possessed a selfless quality of expecting more of himself than he did of others, which endeared him to people. Perpetual optimism, a keen sense of humor, and a sympathizing nature were among his personal attributes which promised to qualify him for pastoral work.

His interest in politics was unusual for a Mennonite minister of his time. He shared the generally accepted principle of the separation of church and state, but unlike some of his contemporaries who closed their ears to news of world governments, he kept up a keen interest in international affairs. He subscribed to the *Weltbote* (World-News), a weekly newspaper published in the German language in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Once a week he walked through the fields or rode to Slabtown to look for its arrival. When he reached the store, his first question was, "Ist die Zeitung hier?" ("Is the paper here?") If the answer was "Nein," he was disappointed. In the evenings, John read the news to him and the two discussed world events and problems. The younger children who listened learned something of the unusual knowledge of geography and history he possessed for one who had not gained it through formal schooling.

His firsthand observation of the undesirable effects of war upon nations made him alert to any news that foreboded strife, especially in those nations surrounding his native land, France. He also closely followed the progress of the new nation where he now lived.

One day after crossing a river near Bowling Green, he met a tall, lanky man whose feet were hanging low on his horse. Like all strangers who met in those days, the two passers-by exchanged a few words. Christian would have liked to converse at length, but the man remarked that it was necessary for him to reach Metamora by a certain time. Each man started on his way, then both travelers, turning their horses simultaneously, asked what both had forgotten—the other's name. Christian gave his. "And yours?" he called. "Abraham Lincoln," was the reply.

That name was to mean more to him as time went on. But from that simple meeting Christian developed a keen interest in the man who later became a president of the United States. He went to Metamora several times to listen to Lincoln's speeches and debates, and was impressed with the simplicity and seriousness of his words. He closely followed Lincoln's political career and, being convinced that he could keep the nation from the threatening war, voted for him in the presidential election. When later asked

why he, a Democrat, had voted for Lincoln, he replied, "I liked his platform, and if that is good, it doesn't make me any difference to which party he belongs."

With all his interest in politics, however, he realized the limitations of human governments and leaders, and maintained the conviction that Christians, as the salt of the earth, could serve God and their country best by living a peaceable and godly life. This belief, formed early in life, became the basis of many of his sermons after he was called to preach.

His first sermon was preached soon after his ordination. That occasion seems to have been more trying for his wife than it was for him. He was then forty-eight years old and his lack of a formal education and inexperience in public speaking caused her to doubt his ability. When the moment came for him to stand before the group and preach the Word of God for the first time, the poor woman felt her courage give way. She took advantage of the fact that Baby Sam began to whimper and left her place to walk out into the yard. There she reflected upon the faith and courage of her husband, and after praying for strength to share the responsibilities of the days ahead, she went in again. Perhaps a reassuring smile was now on her face.

Those who have heard Christian Reeser preach have remembered the warmth of his usual opening words, "Meine geliebten Freunde!" (My beloved friends). Bishop C. F. Derstine says of his sermons: "His style was exhortational. Usually he quoted the Bible considerably, which was quite helpful, indeed. His wholehearted and sincere handling of the Word made him quite effective. He had a vigorous style of presentation. He was whole-souled."

Oftentimes during a service, he led forth in one of his favorite songs. Among those were: "There Is a Fountain," "Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy," and "On Jordan's Stormy Banks." When he preached at funerals he usually sang "The Haven of Rest." On one occasion he took Lena and Ben, aged about twelve and ten, to the funeral of a child and asked them to sing, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

It would be interesting to know the number of times he was called upon to preach at a funeral, but the idea of keeping such a record was not in accord with his conception of service. By far the largest number of his walks across the fields were for the purpose of comforting a bereaved family and preaching at a service for their dead.

Several people who remember his preaching have described it in these words, "He preached straight from the heart." His deep voice carried well and he preached in an overflowing manner and without hesitation. It became apparent that the Spirit of God gave him

the words to speak as he stood before the people.

However, it is not to be supposed that he preached without forethought or study. Although he did not rely on written notes for reminders while he was in the pulpit, he spent many hours each week either reading the Scriptures himself, or having them read until many verses became engraved in his memory. He was of the firm conviction that Biblical truths could be translated into practical daily use. He also felt the need for improving his method of relating those principles so that they would be understood clearly. That is why he could often be heard by his family, practicing aloud as he pulled weeds in the cornfield or did some other work out in the open fields.

There are people who, knowing that his wife did a considerable amount of reading to him, have come to the conclusion that he was unable to read for himself. This was true in the beginning, but after the ordination, Barbara taught him to read. The practice called for considerable effort from him because he started when he was no longer young, and it was always easier for him to concentrate on the message of the words when someone else did the reading. Before starting out for church, he usually requested a rereading of the chapter he had chosen so that it would be fresh in his mind.

The following words from Debolt Householder give an insight, not only into his preaching, but also into other work connected with the life of a minister in those days.

"What he preached, it was from the Bible. His policy in preaching was 'Preach what the people can understand and loud enough so they can hear you.' He didn't have much education, but he was filled with the Holy Spirit. He often walked eight miles on Saturday evenings and stayed overnight with someone who lived near the church so he would be there on time Sunday morning. He often preached in the homes too. He had a lot of 'git' about him and he never quarreled with people. When he went anywhere, he paid out of his own pocket. He helped my brother, Fred, get a wife."

This last-mentioned courtesy was a common part of a preacher's ministry. The custom of that day called for little courting, and once a man had fully made up his mind about whom he wanted to marry, his next step was to make the decision known to one of the ministers. Preacher Reeser was frequently asked to use his power of persuasion in such a cause. Early one day while butchering, he was interrupted by a youth who pressed him to go and ask for the hand of a girl who lived some distance away. Christian felt he could not be spared from the work that day but he finally gave his reluctant consent after the young man had begged to take the minister's place in the day's work. Christian wasted no time travel-

ing to the girl's house, hoping to get her answer and to be home again by evening.

The girl was an interested listener but in spite of Christian's warm and convincing words, she made it very clear that she could not give an answer to a matter of so great importance on such short notice. She stated that she would like to have one day's time to decide. So the minister found himself sympathizing with the girl who had to make a decision of such importance. He made up his mind to forget the butchering and stayed there for the night.

He was surprised the next morning to hear her give her consent without any apparent indecision. He hurried home to give the glad news to the man who had all but given up hope the night before, when Christian did not return. He arrived in time to help finish the butchering job. The accommodating minister later learned that the girl had told her friends she knew all the time she would say "yes" but felt that "a man should be kept waiting at least one day!"

There were some difficult and strained periods in the long years of Christian Reeser's ministry. This can be understood when it is remembered that those were years of rapid growth and change in the whole nation, and consequently, in the church in which he served. He was considered by some of his contemporaries to be liberal on many points, yet like many of the older ministers he perceived harm in some of the new ways of living brought about by commercial and industrial changes. Likewise he grew suspicious of innovations in the church, which, up to that time, had followed a relatively unchanging pattern of life and worship.

The records of the Roanoke congregation show that an unsuccessful attempt was made to start a Sunday school about the year 1882. A second attempt, made in 1883, also met with failure because some of the older ministers and members thought the younger generation was introducing something new which would prove harmful. To draw a fair picture of his life and ministry, it must be said of Preacher Reeser that he was one of those who discouraged these attempts in the beginning. He did not readily submit to the idea of missionary societies, revival meetings and young people's Bible meetings, when they were first introduced in the churches.

After he had passed middle age, he started to chew tobacco and never agreed with the ministers who tried to point out that such a habit was morally wrong and a bad example to the younger people. He began to use tobacco, he said, because Dr. Crawford told him it would cure the trouble he started to have with his eyes. In defense of having acquired the habit, he pointed out the fact that he was able once again to read his Bible without difficulty.

With these few exceptions, Christian agreed with his co-workers. When he disagreed, he did so in a humble manner and never pressed his own personal opinions to a point where disharmony was created or fellowship broken. He was known for upholding the voice of the conference in warning against the sin of "kleider-pracht" (fancy clothes).

His local conference also decided that the Mennonites, as nonresistant people, should not deliver up a thief to civil authorities for punishment. Christian had an opportunity to put this decision into practice very shortly. A certain young man who felt the urge to get some easy cash and who knew where the money was kept in the Reeser household set some brush afire at a safe distance from the house. When he thought that all the family had left to fight the fire, he started to climb into the house through a back window, but was caught by one of the boys who let the window down, keeping him there in a half-in, half-out position. In spite of his cries and pleas he was held fast until the fire was extinguished and the preacher appeared on the scene. He was set free only after he listened to a sermon in which he was duly warned against the sins of deceiving and stealing.

Another incident that involved a neighbor shows that in his daily life Christian practiced what he preached in church. This man, whose first name was Adam, had a reputation of being proud, and he often would scoff at Mr. Reeser for his godly life and kindly warnings about the end to which his sins would bring him. He bitterly resented the minister's rebukes when he gave his frail, meek wife a black eye for no apparent cause.

Adam knew the position his neighbor took regarding the taking of life in warfare and he used every opportunity he could to deride him for that belief. He took an obvious delight in wearing his Civil War coat whenever he appeared before Mr. Reeser. With its large brass buttons, the heavy, woolen, capelike garment made a fine showing.

One day in April, Adam crossed the Mackinaw River and went to Secor to buy a corn planter. It rained hard while he was gone and he was compelled to stay overnight with friends until the river was again low enough to cross with a team and wagon. When he approached the swollen stream the next day, he was apprehensive about the safety of crossing and he forgot to hook the extra fastenings on the hollow-box wagon top to the wheelgear. He guided his horses through the shallow water near the bank, but when he came to the swift part of the current, he felt the reins suddenly shorten. Immediately he knew what was happening but it was too late to do anything. The horses crossed over, taking the front wheels with them while Adam found himself floating downstream sitting precariously atop the wagon box. The helpless man

realized his peril and he began to curse and swear in a manner in which, after long years of experience, he was very proficient.

The preacher and his sons, who were working in the field bordering the river, heard the man's oaths and they saw his wagon box pitch in the swirling water, tossing Adam about like a leaf. The drowning man would lunge after the wagon and lose it again after a moment's hold. In desperation, the man tried to free himself of his heavy, water-soaked, military cape, for it was a millstone about his neck and hindered him in his efforts to save himself. Failure to free himself of it brought forth fresh volleys of cursing.

The boys secretly enjoyed the spectacle, thinking the cold bath was a just punishment for a haughty man like Adam. However, they followed their father's order to pull down a vine of the thick, climbing grape that wound around the trunks of the trees along the bank. They heard him instructing Adam to try to keep his hold on the wagon box and guide it near the shore where they were when it neared the approaching bend in the river. They heard him add, "Stop swearing and pray; it'll do you more good!" Adam feebly tried the suggestion and saw his answer in the form of a strong, ropelike vine being thrown out to him. Once he was safely on shore, the frightened, dripping man slinked homeward without saying a word, his wet cape hugging his body close.

The next day Joe retrieved the back wheels of Adam's wagon and pushed them up to the barnyard. While everyone was inspecting them and speculating upon the possible effect the accident might have on Adam, that man walked shamefacedly into the yard. Silently, he held out a roll of several bills toward his benefactor, but the good man refused them and added, "I don't want your money. I'm happy enough to see that God spared your life!" This irked the man and he cried out, "If you don't take it, I'll throw it on the ground!" He finally succeeded in giving it to the boys who probably felt they were entitled to a little remuneration for their part in the rescue.

Adam's conversion has never been reported, but it is said that in the days that followed, he treated his neighbor, the preacher, with greater respect.

Christian Reeser's reluctance toward accepting money for his services was not always fully appreciated by his sacrificing wife. She sometimes remonstrated with him for putting a generous amount of money in his hat before he began passing it for the offering at church. She reminded him of their poverty at certain times of the year and of the fact that he was paid nothing for all his walking and swimming across the icy river to help people who possessed much more than they, as far as worldly goods were concerned. But his only answer was, "Do you

think I can start the hat around with nothing in it and expect the people to give freely?"

Her attitude can be understood more easily when one considers the difficulties under which she raised her twelve children. It had been especially trying for one who was not trained in girlhood for the sacrifices she was constantly called on to make. Some of her children have recalled a period of extreme discouragement one evening when they were out gathering cabbage to make kraut on the morrow. Their father was gone on one of his frequent trips, at which times her responsibilities were doubly heavy. She stood gazing at the moon, lost in deep thought. Then she mused, half-aloud "O moon, you're shining now on my home in Germany. If I could only be there now! I'd walk all the way back if I could."

Then while she was on the subject of the past, she spoke for the first and only time of the man in Philadelphia to whom she had first been engaged. She had heard he had become wealthy in the business in which he was still struggling when she broke her relationship with him. Aloud, she wondered if life would have been easier if she had married him instead of the minister who always sacrificed.

Although Minister Reeser felt his wife sometimes worried too much about the temporal side of life, yet he realized that without her brave sacrifices, he would never have been able to carry on the spiritual ministry that he did. For her sake, he was glad when they were able to retire on a small place near Eureka, where she could live a less burdensome life. After she was gone he keenly missed the grey-haired companion who had sat by his side so many times, reading the Bible to him. Even though he continued to preach after she died, it can be said that his active period of ministry came to a close around the time of her passing.

(The above chapter is taken from *Christian Reeser—The Story of a Centenarian*, by Ethel Reeser Cosco, Route 1, Tangent, Oregon, from whom this new book of 101 pages may be ordered for \$3.00.)

NEW BOOKS

J. Winfield Fretz's *Pilgrims in Paraguay* was published recently by the Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa.

G. F. Hershberger's *War, Peace and Nonresistance* has been revised and reprinted by the Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa.

Delbert Gratz's *Bernese Anabaptists* was published by the Mennonite Historical Society, Goshen, Indiana, in 1953.

Annamarie Krause's doctoral dissertation entitled *Mennonite Settlement in the Paraguayan Chaco* was published by the Department of Geography, University of Chicago, in December 1952.

A Brief History of the Mennonite Congregation at Concord, Tennessee

MRS. T. K. HERSHEY

I remember my great-grandfather John Stoltzfus as a man of medium height, kindly blue eyes looking out from beneath shaggy white eyebrows. I was 10 years old when he passed away. He preached in German, dressed Amish, and was a broad-minded man.

One incident that I remember was that when two of his grandchildren (one an aunt of mine) requested to be baptized by immersion, he took them to a neighboring creek and immersed them, this in spite of having been brought up and having served in the Old Order Amish Church.

My great-grandfather was a deacon in the Amish Church near Gap, Pa., which met in private homes for worship. He saw the inconvenience of large gatherings in private houses. It may have been a western idea to build meetinghouses, but the idea found his favor. He donated the ground for the erection of the Millwood Church near Gap, Pa., and for a cemetery. It is said that one of his little daughters was laid away in the first grave of this cemetery.

Great-grandfather John Stoltzfus found his bride, Catherine Hooley, in the Kishacoquillas Valley, Mifflin County, Pa. This was a distance of more than 100 miles from Gap, Lancaster County, Pa. When Catherine had her belongings packed to move to Lancaster County, they were loaded on a boat and shipped down the Susquehanna. John and his bride started off on horseback. They had gone only a short distance, when Catherine remembered that she had forgotten the key to the trunk of her dowry. John did not care to have her return for the key for fear she might change her mind about going to Lancaster County. He himself returned for it. Great-grandmother was a brave woman; no one ever knew her to be homesick or discouraged through all her trials.

They had a family of 15 children. There were two pairs of twins. (Silvanus Yoder of Goshen, Ind., is the son of one of the twins. Leah was her name.) When their children were all married except the youngest two, John B. and Jacob M., the father heard propaganda concerning rehabilitation in the South due to the Civil War having devastated much of the country and homes. Thinking there might be an opportunity for buying cheaper land than could be bought in Lancaster County, in March 1872, John Stoltzfus at the age of 67 set out to organize a colony of Amish settlers near Concord, Tenn., 15 miles west of the city of Knoxville. As a colony, they were granted free transportation of their household goods. A Southern plantation was purchased. Two

of his married daughters—Mrs. C. B. Neuhauser (mother of Mrs. I. W. Royer), and my grandmother, Mrs. John S. Stoltzfus (Stoltzfus married to Stoltzfus), and three of his four sons made their home in Tennessee.

Here Great-grandfather again donated land for a church and a cemetery, where he and his wife, the two daughters, Mrs. Neuhauser and Mrs. Stoltzfus and husbands, and a number of grandchildren are buried.

John Stoltzfus, Sr., was the minister who shepherded the little flock. Other Amish Mennonite families moved in but there was a restlessness, perhaps for economic reasons. Tennessee had been the battleground of the Civil War, which was felt for many years. He used to say that if the Amish did not care to come, he wished the Mennonites would come. One Mennonite family moved in before he passed away in 1887 at the age of 82. His son John B. had been ordained to take the father's place but for some reasons he did not continue. Just about this time his three sons, Christian H., John B. and Jacob M., joined the Plymouth Brethren in the city of Knoxville.

For about a year after the death of Great-grandfather, the little Amish Mennonite colony had no leader. They attended the Methodist Sunday school and services about one and a half miles away. I well remember how we enjoyed the fellowship in Sunday school rallies and picnics.

In 1888 Henry H. Good (father of Mary M. Good, missionary to India), an ordained minister at Elida, Ohio, moved with his family to take charge of the Concord Church. It was to be an amalgamation of Amish and Mennonites and was known thereafter as a Mennonite Church. Some who were Amish always stayed Amish in their ideas. One "bone of contention" was that of joining a conference. The Amish are congregational in government. If the congregation belongs to a conference, then conference rules.

Bro. Good was not a bishop; for this reason, a bishop was called usually from Ohio or Virginia, to administer the duties of bishop. When a bishop was called, invariably the question of joining a conference was discussed and voted on, the Amish element and others voting against it. At long last, perhaps 14 or 15 years, Bro. Good gave up and resolved to move to another locality. This may have been about the year 1903 that he and a part of his family moved to South Boston, Va. Here he lived only a few years and is buried there near South Boston, Va. He

was yet a comparatively young man, just about fifty years of age.

During the 15 years, more or less, that Bro. Good had charge of the church at Concord, a number of Mennonite families moved in until there was a flourishing congregation of 100 to 150. A larger church building was erected and activities increased. Another man, Noah Z. Yoder of Amish background, was ordained minister. Henry J. Powell, Mennonite, of Elida, Ohio (formerly), was ordained deacon. These men were well received and the arrangement was congenial with the congregation. The next step would have been to ordain a bishop, but that was not realized.

There was really never the harmony and unity in the brotherhood that there should have been. Ultraconservatism did not take with those who had not been brought up that way and who had no conviction for it.

So for various reasons, one by one the families moved to other localities until there are only three of the original families left. There is only one at Concord; the other two are in Knoxville. Bro. Yoder, the minister, moved with his family to Fairview, Mich., where he passed away some years later. Bro. Powell, the deacon, was given the privilege often to take charge of services. Later, Wm. Jennings was ordained as minister and now is bishop also. Mrs. Jennings is a daughter of Henry H. Good. The congregation has been affiliated with the Virginia Conference.

The Virginia Conference now considers the Concord congregation as a mission outpost. Bro. Lawrence Brunk had finished a 2-year term there just prior to the launching of the Brunk Bros. Tent Revivals.

Elverson, Pa.

RESEARCH NEWS

Dr. Cornelius Krahn was awarded a Fulbright scholarship for research at the University of Amsterdam during the 1953-54 school year. His topic is "The Contributions of the Dutch Mennonites in the Realm of Religious Thought and Social Institutions."

Robert Kreider received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago in June 1953. His thesis topic concerned the relation of the Swiss Anabaptists to the state. Dr. Kreider is serving as Dean of Bluffton College.

Paul Peachey received his doctor's degree from the University of Zurich in August 1953. His dissertation dealt with the social status of the early Swiss Anabaptists. Dr. Peachey is now on the faculty of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.